

# Focus for Life



A SPECIAL  
SECTION OF THE  
FOUR SEASONS/  
WEEKENDER  
NORTH

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DECEMBER 2025



## ADRC of Washburn County to Celebrate the 2025 SUBARU SHARE THE LOVE® EVENT



### SUBMITTED BY

**LINDA HAND**

ADRC Director/  
Aging Director

Since 2008, Subaru and its retailers have helped deliver nearly 5 million meals and friendly visits to seniors served by the Meals on Wheels organization across the country. For the 18th year, Meals on Wheels America has been chosen again as one of Subaru's national charity partners for the annual Share the Love Event. From November 20, 2025, to January 2, 2026, Subaru and its retailers will donate at least \$300 to their charity partners for every vehicle leased or sold. As a Meals on Wheels member, the ADRC of Washburn County can potentially earn thousands of dollars in unrestricted funding by participating in the event!

This annual event has raised nearly \$42,500 for our Washburn County nutrition programs since 2018, allowing us to offer special services, equipment, and supplies to those we serve throughout Washburn County.

### WE WOULD LOVE YOU TO JOIN US!

Until January 2, 2026, the ADRC and volunteers will offer extra special services to our Home Delivered Meal participants.

This year, we will be erecting Share the Love Giving Trees at the ADRC Office and at the meal sites. You can purchase a Share the Love Heart for \$7 to put on your tree, and the proceeds will help buy a meal for one of our home-delivered or congregate meal participants in need.

We will also be collecting new fleece throw blankets to deliver to our homebound participants for Christmas. Donations can be dropped off at the ADRC office in Shell Lake or at one of our meal sites in Birchwood, Minong, Shell Lake, and Spooner. If you have any questions, don't hesitate to contact our office at 715-635-4460.

### In the past, volunteers have helped:

- Help clean up and wash dishes in the 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 individuals 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 organizes special activities in conjunction with the meals and is always looking for volunteers to assist

Cash donations are always appreciated, as funding is limited and our numbers grow each year. Projected through the end of 2025, it is estimated that the Senior Nutrition Program will serve over 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:  
Attention: 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/>

### MEDICARE NEWS

**SUBMITTED BY**  
**TARA MACONE**

Elder Benefit Specialist (EBS)

### MEDICARE OPEN ENROLLMENT PERIOD IS RIGHT AROUND THE CORNER...Are You Prepared?

*By Ingrid Kundinger,  
Wisconsin SMP Program Director*

It's time to start thinking about Medicare's Open Enrollment Period (OEP). Medicare's OEP runs from October 15 to December 7, 2025, and is the time to review and make changes to your Medicare health or drug coverage. During this time, you can:

- Switch between Original Medicare and a Medicare Advantage Plan
- Join, drop, or switch a Part D prescription drug plan
- Review and update your current plan to meet your needs better. Changes that you make to your Medicare coverage will take effect on January 1, 2026.



PHOTO SUBMITTED  
**Tara Macone**  
Elder Benefit  
Specialist (EBS)

are satisfied with your current plan, coverage and costs can change each year. Comparing options could save you money or improve your benefits.

### HERE ARE 5 SIMPLE STEPS TO HELP YOU PREPARE:

#### 1. Review your current coverage.

Look at your current plan's Annual Notice of Change. This outlines changes in coverage, costs, or provider networks for the coming year. If you are unsure whether your current plan will still meet your needs, it's worth comparing.

#### 2. Make a list of your current needs.

Consider what changed this past year – new prescriptions, doctors, or health concerns. Your coverage should fit your current health situation, not just last year's.

#### 3. Compare plans in your area.

Use the Medicare Plan Finder at Medicare.gov or call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227) to see what plans are available in your area.

You can also contact your local Elder Benefit Specialist or Tribal Benefit Specialist in your county. For

SEE MEDICARE NEXT PAGE

## ADRC NEWS

## END OF PILOT PROJECT CHANGING MEDICARE ADVANTAGE PLAN SUPPLEMENTAL BENEFITS

By the GWAAR Legal Services Team (for reprint)

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) is ending the Medicare Advantage Value-Based Insurance Design (VBID) Model at the end of 2025. This means that many Advantage plan enrollees will no longer be eligible for some supplemental benefits offered by these plans, including transportation to medical appointments, home-delivered meals, or flex cards for over-the-counter drugs or groceries.

The VBID Model began in 2017 as a way to let Advantage plans test ways to improve the quality of care and lower spending for Advantage plan enrollees. Plans were allowed to offer benefits like meal delivery, transportation to medical appointments, and lower drug costs for specific groups of people, including those with chronic illnesses or individuals with low incomes. The goal was to increase access to and use of these services to improve health and decrease avoidable medical spending on behalf of these enrollees.

CMS announced that the program will end because it cost Medicare billions of dollars more than expected. Although the VBID model helped some enrollees, it failed to save money, which was one of the goals of the program. CMS did not believe any policy changes could address these costs.

As a result, beginning in 2026, Advantage plans may not be able to offer non-medical supplemental benefits to all enrollees. However, plans may be able to offer similar benefits through the Special Supplemental Benefits for the Chronically Ill (SSBCI) program. Under the SSBCI program, supplemental benefits must be reasonably expected to improve or maintain the health of someone with a chronic medical condition. In order to qualify for these benefits, enrollees must provide proof of a qualifying chronic illness that has a high risk of hospitalization or other adverse health outcomes and requires intensive care coordination.

If you are planning to enroll in a Medicare Advantage plan, check the plan materials carefully to make sure you understand all benefits offered. If you were hoping to use supplemental benefits, contact the plan to see whether you will be eligible.

## STEPS TO INCREASE YOUR ACCESS TO FOOD

By the GWAAR Legal Services Team (for reprint)

When living on a budget, people may have to make hard choices between housing, medications, food, and other essentials, especially when FoodShare benefits are cut. Here are some steps to help you maintain your access to food and stretch your budget.

- Practice meal planning. Thinking about what you're going to make or eat ahead of time cuts down on stress and makes it easier to shop on a budget.
- Research food banks and community meals in your area. Donated meals and food items can go a long way toward stretching your food budget. Feeling nervous about asking for help? These resources are there for you to use. Consider volunteering to see how the process works. You may feel better about having a meal with others if you help prepare and/or serve it.
- Plan to grow your own produce. You can start small, with herbs in jars or a few plants on a windowsill or patio. If you feel up to it, start a vegetable garden. Raised garden beds don't require a lot of space, and there may be an organization in your area with volunteers to assist. You could also see if there's a community garden in your area with plots that can be reserved.
- Watch for sales to stock up on non-perishable items like canned goods. Make sure you are storing things properly if you don't plan to use them right away.
- Buy in bulk if practical. If you have storage space, it may make sense to buy large quantities of certain items.
- Consider dehydrating and/or canning food to preserve it. There may be classes offered on how to do this. Learn a new hobby!
- Start a regular potluck group. Ask a group of friends or neighbors to join a weekly or monthly potluck where everyone brings something to share. This is a great way to socialize, try new foods, and perhaps bring home leftovers!
- If you live with others, think about food options available to household members that could help maximize your budget. If school-age children live with you, are they offered breakfast and/or lunch for free? Do they participate in after-school programs that offer snacks or meals? Are there restaurants offering free or discounted meals on certain nights for seniors?
- Learn more about food waste and how to cut down on it at Reducing Food Waste at Home | Wisconsin DNR <https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/waste/residentialfoodwaste.html>.

## Stronger Healing Starts Here

### WOUND CARE YOU CAN TRUST

Our wound care expert is trained in the latest techniques to help you heal better and get back to living your life to the fullest. As a partner in your health journey, Nicole also provides education and prevention strategies to support you in your healing.



Schedule an appointment with Nicole Perkins, APNP Wound Care Specialist today. Call 715-939-1751 or visit [SpoonerHealth.com](http://SpoonerHealth.com).

## MEDICARE FROM FRONT PAGE

Washburn County residents age 60+, **Tara Macone** is the **ADRC of Washburn County Elder Benefit Specialist**. You can contact her to schedule an appointment at **715-635-4460**. If you live in another county, you can search at <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/benefit-specialists/counties.htm> or call your county Aging & Disability Resource Center office. These specialists can provide one-on-one support in reviewing your Medicare options. This program offers free, confidential, and unbiased assistance – no sales, no pressure.

### 4. Be aware of costs beyond premiums.

Look at deductibles, copayments, drug formularies, and network restrictions. Consider that the lowest monthly premium is not always the most affordable plan overall.

### 5. Enroll by December 7.

Avoid last-minute issues by giving yourself time to make decisions and get support. **DON'T FALL FOR SCAMS DURING OPEN ENROLLMENT**

Unfortunately, scammers often take advantage of Medicare Open Enrollment by pretending to offer assistance while trying to gain access to your personal information. Stay safe by keeping these tips in mind:

- **Medicare will never call or visit you to sell anything.** If someone contacts you out of the blue and asks for your Medicare number or other personal information, hang up or close the door.
- **Be cautious of offers that sound too good to be true.** "Free" services or gifts tied to enrolling in a plan could be a red flag.
- **Don't give out your Medicare or Social Security number to anyone except trusted professionals** like your doctor, pharmacist, or Elder Benefit Specialist.
- **Report any suspicious activities or suspected scams**

## ADRC NEWS



PHOTO SUBMITTED

**Jacqueline Coffee**

Jacqueline Coffee recently joined the ADRC team as a Disability Specialist. Originally from Northern Wisconsin, she has recently returned to the area with her son and is excited to reconnect with the community. Outside of work she enjoys exploring new recipes in the kitchen, and spending time outdoors or in the garden. She looks forward to fostering meaningful, helpful connections within the community and strives to make every interaction welcoming and supportive.

## UPDATE ON MEDICARE DRUG PRICE NEGOTIATION

By the GWAAR Legal Services Team (for reprint)

The Inflation Reduction Act of 2022 (IRA) gave the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) the ability to negotiate prices for some high-cost prescription drugs. Ten drugs were selected for the first round of negotiations, and CMS has reached agreements for lower prices for these drugs beginning in 2026:

- Eliquis
- Xarelto
- Farxiga
- Enbrel
- Stelara
- Jardiance
- Januvia
- Entresto
- Imbruvica
- NovoLog

These drugs treat conditions like cancer, diabetes, blood clots, heart failure, autoimmune conditions, and chronic kidney disease. In 2022, Medicare enrollees paid a total of \$3.4 billion in out-of-pocket costs for these drugs.

However, the 2025 budget reconciliation bill, known as the One Big Beautiful Bill Act or H.R. 1, limited the drugs that can be selected for the negotiation process. Under H.R. 1, more "orphan drugs," which treat rare diseases, are excluded from the Medicare drug price negotiation. The IRA only excluded orphan drugs that treated just one rare disease. However, H.R. 1 excludes drugs that treat any rare diseases, even if the drug treats more than one. In addition, if a drug was ever considered an "orphan drug," it will take longer for the drug to become eligible for negotiation. This means that Medicare will have to pay full price for these drugs, and beneficiaries will continue to pay high out-of-pocket costs.

## NUTRITION PROGRAM NEWS

## WASHBURN COUNTY SENIOR NUTRITION PROGRAM SUGGESTED CONTRIBUTION INCREASE ON JANUARY 1ST, 2026

SUBMITTED BY **CHARLOTTE MICKELSON**

Nutrition Director

Beginning January 1st, 2026, the suggested contribution for senior dining meals and home delivered meals will increase to a sliding scale, starting at \$7.00 up to \$9.00 per meal. The suggested contribution for the monthly Dining at 5 meal will increase to \$9.00 to \$11.00 per meal.

After careful consideration and consultation with the Aging and Disability Services Committee, it was decided to increase the suggested contribution. Our goal is always to find ways to reduce or maintain our costs without lowering the quality or nutritional value of our meals. Keeping the costs down allows us to be able to serve the increasing senior population within Washburn County. Our average cost to prepare, serve, package, and deliver is \$15.69 per meal.

Our meals are partially funded through federal legislation called the Older Americans Act. This is very important legislation that specifically says we cannot charge adults over the age of 60 for their meals and must offer older adults an opportunity to contribute toward the cost of their meals.

Twenty-six percent of the nutrition program revenues come from participant and community contributions, so they are very important to the sustainability of this program. All contributions are voluntary and are kept confidential regardless of amount. Nobody will be denied meals if they are unable or choose not to contribute. You may contribute more or less than the suggested amount. You may continue to contribute the same amount you have been. No matter what you contribute, you are always welcome to dine!

The purpose of the Senior Nutrition Program is to reduce hunger and food insecurity, to promote socialization of older adults, and to promote the health and well-being of older individuals. Everyone 60 years or better is welcome to participate in this great and valuable program in Washburn County.

For more information about senior dining, home delivered meals, or the increase in suggested contribution, please contact Charlotte Mickelson at 715-635-4460. Thank you for your support and understanding.



Aging & Disability Resource Center  
of Washburn County

**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/>

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

**Bethany Miller & Ted Hampe 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 understand your situation and work closely with you and your support network to determine the next steps.

**Tara Macone - 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.

**Jackie Coffee - Disability Benefit Specialist (DBS) - 715-635-4466** A DBS assists people age 17 1/2 - 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.

**Charlotte Mickelson - 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 Managers:** Kristi Shoop (Birchwood) • Vacant (Minong) • Hope Dodge (Shell Lake) • Jena Hammersberg (Spooner) • Patricia Love (Spooner Cook)

**Angie Hicks - Administrative/Transportation Coordinator - 715-635-4465** Washburn County Transit provides medical, nutritional, and social rides for residents age 60+ and adults with disabilities.

**Washburn County Transit Drivers**

Fred Kosmach • Mike Schroeder • Victoria Corton

**Lana Balts - Fiscal Assistant • 715-635-4463**

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

**ADRC Governing Board:** Bob Olsgard - Chair, Danielle Larson, Char Snarski, Colleen Cook, Shell Lake Open Seat, Mark Van Etten, Mike Schroeder

## ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS FOR:

- Minong Site Manager/Cook • Substitute Cooks

**VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES FOR:** • Citizens' ADRC Governing Board • Meals on Wheels Delivery Drivers • Kitchen Assistance at Meal Sites • Office Help • Health Promotion Leaders • Activity & Educational Presentation Facilitators

**Do not hesitate to get in touch with Linda Hand, ADRC Director, at 715-635-4460 for more information.**

## SPOONER SENIOR CENTER NEWS

### SPOONER SENIOR CENTER

#### WASHBURN COUNTY WELLNESS CENTER 50+

850 W. Beaverbrook Ave., Spooner | 715.635.8283

NUTRITION SITE MANAGER: JENA HAMMERSBERG  
CO-CHAIRS: CLAUDIA BROZ • 651-354-7846 | MARIE ZELLMER

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

TRAIL CAM BLUES! The trail cam batteries were dead! Pictures of the hunting grounds at the cabin could not be accessed. I live closer to the cabin than my son so I replaced them. It took 16 batteries. I grabbed my coupon "Spend \$25, Get \$5 Off" and headed to the store.

SHOOT!! The batteries were short of the \$25 so I added two fingernail clippers to get to the \$25. The sale was processed but the coupon was not credited. The sale was refunded.

The second attempt also failed but this time it was noticed I was still 13 cents short. I threw in another fingernail clipper. The sale was about to be processed again when the clerk noticed my coupon had EXPIRED. When I exclaimed "my coupon has expired???" the manager whispered to the clerk, "just give her the coupon and get this line moving!" I gave my son a fingernail clipper for his birthday!

A note about our October tailgate party: 30-35 people attended and to no surprise, Jenny and Dave's grilled chicken was a hit as there were no leftovers. Thank you also to the pot luckers that made it a great meal. Al Hanson furnished the festive fall and Halloween decorations at the center.

Thanks Al.

Did you grab your date/friend/neighbor for our November movies? "Thursday Murder Club" and "Downtown Abbey: The Grand Finale" were both shown on our new TV. It has good sound and clarity. Donations for this TV are still welcomed. THERE WILL BE NO MOVIE SHOWN IN DECEMBER.

Our Senior Nite Out dined at SALS in Barronett November 13th. Remember the sign up sheet is at the center if you liked to join us.

November's Dining @ 5 decorations were accented with hand drawn turkeys from my granddaughter. Roger Baumhofer's handmade tokens "Gather Together" were attached to the napkins which opened to a delicious meal. Bingo was also played.

Spooner's Ladies Night Out November 24th was a delight as we started with a Salad Luncheon at the center. After we enjoyed some fun filled games, we hit the streets for shopping and adventures.

On December 9th we will assemble

the Christmas gift bags for the Meals on Wheels program. Thank you for the donations from Kwik Trip, Bill and Jeanette Lee, Mayana Chocolates, the elementary school kids and our seniors.

Join in at our December Dining @ 5 for some holiday fun...special menu, special mocktails and decorations.

Be sure to wear your ugly Christmas sweater! There will be a contest for the ugliest. There is no bingo BUT great entertainment is planned starting at 3:30. Bob Seckora & Friends will provide music. There will be carolers and a reading of "The Night Before Christmas" for all of us young at heart.

I won 1st prize at 500 cards a couple weeks ago. I'm bringing a special treat for 500 cards on December 10th to celebrate. (Wheel of Fortune Cookies?) Did you know your Synovial Fluid thickens and becomes less effective in the cold weather? It lubricates joints. Guess we better find a cozy fireplace to snuggle up to and some hot chocolate. Happy Holidays!!

## SHELL LAKE SENIOR CENTER NEWS

### SHELL LAKE SENIOR CENTER

#### FRIENDSHIP COMMONS

210 4th Avenue, Shell Lake | 715.468.4750

NUTRITION SITE MANAGER: CHAR JAEGER  
CO-PRESIDENTS: CONNEE BRABEC & SUE WORRE

**JUNE WILLIS - Vice President**  
**Friendship Commons**  
Shell Lake Senior Center

Happy Happy Holidays to All! It's the last month of 2025, and wonderful things are happening. December is known for Winter Holidays and celebrations, including Christmas, Ha-

nukkah, and Kwanzaa, where families gather together, have fun, and make memories. New Year's Eve is the 31st of the month—it's hard to believe that 2026 is right around the corner.

Other happenings in December are: St. Nick Day on the 6th and National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day on December 7th. On December 3rd, International Day of Persons with

Disabilities promotes the rights and well-being of persons with disabilities.

The first Christmas celebration in America was in 1539 in Tallahassee, Florida. No trees or presents, just a religious mass. The word Merry in Merry Christmas was not always accepted because being merry used to signify slight intoxication.

Just a couple of interesting trivia facts for December: three billion Christmas cards are sent in the US each year, and Christmas trees have been sold in the US since 1850.

Friendship Commons continues its activities with Tai Chi on Mondays, quilting, games, and cards on Wednesdays. We are still playing Scribbage and Smear and have a great time play-

ing board games.

Our 36 Old Clucks and Their Chicks quilt is coming along, with the Stitch and Chat group hand-quilting. Still would love to have you join us at 9:00 on Wednesday.

We hope to resume painting in February after Joni Campbell recovers. We have missed her!!

Our Center is decorated and looks very festive.

Please call our Site Manager, Hope, at 715-468-4750 to order eat-in meals at the Shell Lake Senior Center. Make sure you order the day prior.

To order Meals on Wheels delivery in Washburn County, call Char Jaeger, Nutrition Director, at 715-635-4460.

## SEVERE WINTER WEATHER REMINDER

It's winter weather season again! Snow is upon us, and we 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 snow and ice.

Senior Nutrition Programs may be cancelled, and there will be no home-delivered meals if the roads are slippery or dangerous due to a snow-

storm 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." The ADRC of Washburn County Facebook Page will update information, tune into the local news channel, and 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 can deliver your meal safely. If it is not cleared of snow or ice and it is dangerous, the driver may not be able to give you 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.

**Have a Safe and Warm Winter!**



## SENIOR CENTERS & CHICOG ACTIVITY CALENDARS

### BIRCHWOOD SENIOR CENTER: **715.354.3001**

110 EUCLID AVE., BIRCHWOOD, WI  
CONGREGATE DINING 11:45 AM

**MONDAYS:** Yoga ..... 8:30 AM  
**2nd MONDAY:** Dining at 5..... 5:00 PM  
**LAST MONDAY:** Membership Meeting 12:30 PM  
**TUESDAYS:** Aerobics..... 8:30 AM  
 Chair Exercise..... 9:00 AM  
**WEDNESDAYS:** Yoga ..... 8:30 AM  
 Cribbage..... 1:00 PM  
**THURSDAYS:** Aerobics..... 8:30 AM  
 Chair Exercise..... 9:00 AM  
 Dominoes..... 12:30 PM  
**SPECIAL HIGHLIGHTS:**  
**2nd TUES. OF MONTH** Nimbles Craft Group  
 (Following Lunch) ..... 12:30 PM  
**3rd THUR. OF MONTH** Movie Night .. 6:00 PM

### SHELL LAKE SENIOR CENTER: **715.468.4750**

FRIENDSHIP COMMONS  
210 4TH AVENUE, SHELL LAKE, WI  
CONGREGATE DINING 11:30 AM

**MONDAYS:** Tai Chi..... 10:00 AM  
**TUESDAYS:** Games..... 9:00 AM  
 Cribbage..... 10:30 AM  
**WEDNESDAYS:** Games ..... 9:00 AM  
 Quilting..... 9:00 AM  
**THURSDAYS:** Games ..... 9:00 AM  
 Cribbage ..... 12:30 PM

**SPECIAL HIGHLIGHTS:**  
**LAST MONDAY OF THE MONTH:** Friends of the Center Meeting (Open to Public) 12:30 PM  
**LAST MONDAY OF THE MONTH:** .....12:30 PM  
**White Elephant Bingo** (Open to Public)

### MINONG AREA SENIOR CENTER:

**715.466.4448**

700 HOUSTON ST.  
CONGREGATE DINING 11:30 AM  
(Need to register 1 day in advance)

#### TUESDAYS:

Bridge (2nd and 4th Tuesdays) ..... 9:00 AM  
 Farkle (1st, 3rd & 5th Tuesday's of the Month) ..... 12:00 PM  
 Cards (2nd & 4th Tuesday's of the Month) ..... 12:00 PM  
 Wii Bowling (every Tuesday)..... 12:00 PM  
**WEDNESDAYS:** Pocket of Prayer ..... 9:00 AM  
**THURSDAYS:** Cribbage..... 12:30 PM  
**FRIDAYS:** TBD

#### SPECIAL HIGHLIGHTS:

**WED DEC 10:** Board Meeting .....1:00 PM  
**THU DEC 11:** Annual Children's Christmas Party  
**SAT DEC 13:** Potluck/Bingo..... Noon  
 Foot Care (3rd Wednesday monthly) .....  
 Call 715.466.4299 to schedule  
**DEC 24 & 25:** ..... Center closed

### SPOONER SENIOR CENTER: **715.635.8283**

WASHBURN COUNTY WELLNESS CENTER 50+  
850 W. BEAVERBROOK AVE.  
CONGREGATE DINING 12:00 PM

#### MONDAYS:

Mexican Train Dominoes, TaiChi .....1:00 PM

4th Monday of the month, Board meeting ..... 10:30 AM

**TUESDAYS:** Mah Jongg ..... 1:00 PM

**WEDNESDAYS:** Chair Dancing ..... 9:30 AM

500 Cards & Bridge..... 1:00 PM

**THURSDAYS:** Mah Jongg ..... 9:00 AM

Games ..... 10:00 AM

Hand and Foot..... 1:00 PM

#### FRIDAYS:

Craft and Coffee ..... 10 AM - 12 PM

#### NO MOVIE FOR DECEMBER

#### EVERY 3rd FRI:

Savvy Senior Book Club ..... 10:30 AM

### CHICOG IMPORTANT DATES

**WEDNESDAY, 12/10** Monthly Meeting .... 6 PM

**WEDNESDAYS, 12/10 & 24**

Namekagen Transit Service

**THURSDAY, 12/11** Bibliodragon Bookmobile,

Town Hall ..... 10:30 AM-12

**SAT, 11/22** Hunters Feed, Town Hall ..... 5-8 PM

**WEDNESDAY, 12/17** Books & Bread,

Beaverbrook ..... 10:30 AM - 2 PM

**Town Website:** [www.townofchicog.com](http://www.townofchicog.com)

## FOOT & NAIL CARE SERVICES

### Foot & Nail Care Services

for seniors and people with disabilities who live in Washburn County  
at the Spooner Wellness Center 50+ and Birchwood Wellness Center 50+

BY APPOINTMENT ONLY

#### EVERY SERVICE INCLUDES:

- Warm Soak
- Nail Trim & File
- Callus Reduction (foot)
- Lotion

All reusable tools are  
autoclave sterilized!

#### RATES:

\$25 Fingernail Trim  
\$35 Foot Care and  
Tonenail Trim

**Cash or check only**  
**Cannot bill insurance**

Reimbursement programs  
may be available.

To learn more, contact the  
Washburn County Aging and  
Disability Resource Center  
(ADRC) at 715-635-4460

**Call or Text to Schedule**  
**715-645-2558**

*Our Advanced  
Technology  
can  
Revolutionize  
Your Smile*



### Night Guards

Especially important for seniors to prevent  
tooth damage, jaw pain and even headaches.  
Don't wait for injury—take control of your dental  
health with a night guard today - get yours in  
just 2 appointments and take it home in a  
week or less!

For more information, please visit  
[GreenValleyDentalCare.com](http://GreenValleyDentalCare.com)  
or give us a call: **715-635-7888**

#### Senior Dental Savings Plan

#### NO INSURANCE? NO PROBLEM!

- Seniors 60 years & older eligible
- Includes 2 cleanings, most recommended x-rays and 3 exams per year
- No waiting period
- No monthly premiums or deductibles
- No yearly maximum



**GREEN VALLEY  
DENTAL CARE**  
Paul A. Kloek, D.D.S.  
W7154 Green Valley Rd.  
Spooner, WI

# DECEMBER

LUNCH & HOME DELIVERED MEALS MENU				
MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Seasoned Chicken Breast, Sautéed White Beans with Garlic, Sage, & Tomatoes, Whole Grain Bread, Buttered Carrots, Pears <b>SHELL LAKE DINING AT 5</b> 8	Swedish Meatballs with Creamy Mushroom Sauce over Mashed Potatoes, Green Beans, Whole Grain Bread, Fresh Apple <b>Brunch for Lunch</b> Sausage, Green Pepper & Spinach Egg Bake, Breakfast Potatoes, Buttermilk Biscuit, Orange Juice Yogurt Parfait with Berries 9	Chicken, Vegetable & Dumpling Soup Garden Salad w/ Dressing Whole Grain Dinner Roll Ambrosia Salad 3	Fish Sandwich with Leaf Lettuce served with a side of Tartar Sauce Sweet Potato Fries Apple-Cranberry Coleslaw 4	Roasted Pork Tenderloin with an Apple Glaze Baked Potato, Buttered Beets WG Bread Triple Berry Crisp 5
Tuna Salad w/ Leaf Lettuce on WG Bread, Cucumber & Tomato Salad with Dill Carrot Sticks, Crisp Grapes <b>SHELL LAKE DINING AT 5</b> 8	Oven-Roasted Turkey Cheesy Twice-Baked Sweet Potato, Asparagus Whole Grain Bread Pistachio Fluff Fruit Salad 10	White Bean, Pumpkin & Sausage Ravioli Bake Buttered Peas Whole Grain Bread Peaches 11	Basil Crusted Chicken "Three Sisters" Wild Rice Salad WG Bread, Buttered Green Beans Cherry Cheese Delight 12	
Spaghetti & Meatballs over Whole Grain Noodles, Walnut Caesar Salad, WG Garlic Breadstick, Pears <b>SPONNER DINING AT 5</b> 15	BBQ Baked Ribs Baked Potato, Cheesy California Blend Veggies, Whole Grain Bread Strawberry Pretzel Dessert 16	Breaded Chicken Sandwich with Lettuce, Tomato, Onion & Mayo Sweet Potato Puffs Creamy Coleslaw Fresh Clementine 17	<b>Christmas Dinner</b> Holiday Roast Beef Mashed Potatoes & Gravy, Green Bean Almondine, Christmas Crunch Salad, Cranberry Wild Rice Bread Frosted Sugar Cookie 18	Chicken & Black Bean Enchiladas served with Refried Beans, Spanish Rice, Mexican Coleslaw Fruit Salad 19
Pulled Pork Sandwich on a Whole Grain Bun Baked Beans Potato Salad Pineapple <b>BIRCHWOOD DINING AT 5</b> 22	Broccoli-Ham & Cheese Baked Potato Buttered Carrots Whole Grain Bread Pears 23	<b>HOLIDAY OBSERVANCE</b> No Meals Served 24	<b>HOLIDAY OBSERVANCE</b> No Meals Served 25	<b>CLOSED</b> No Meals Served 26
Chicken & Vegetable Stir Fry over Brown Rice Egg Roll Mandarin Oranges 29	Tomato Basil Soup Grilled Cheese Baked Parmesan Broccoli Garden Salad w/ Dressing Cottage Cheese w/ Peaches 30	Cheeseburger W/G Bun Sweet Potato Fries Cranberry-Walnut Chickpeas Salad Fruit Fluff 31		

# DINING @ 5

## MINONG MENU

### DATE AND MENU TO BE DETERMINED

The Minong Senior Center Board will be notified.

Watch our Facebook Page for updates

## SHELL LAKE MENU

### MONDAY, DECEMBER 8th

Roast Beef, Scalloped Potatoes, Broccoli, Side Salad, Dinner Roll, Hope's Surprise Dessert

## SPONNER MENU

### MONDAY, DECEMBER 15th

Prime Rib, Baked Potato, Roasted Brussels, Winter Garden Salad, Dinner Roll, Gingerbread Spice Cheesecake

## BIRCHWOOD MENU

### TUESDAY, DECEMBER 23rd

White Chicken and Spinach Lasagna, Parmesan Asparagus, Caesar Salad, Garlic Bread Stick, Kristi's Choice Dessert

Suggested Contribution 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

## SENIOR CENTERS DINING AND ACTIVITIES

### Charlotte Mickelson - Nutrition Director

Email:

cjaeger@co.washburn.wi.us  
ADRC of Washburn County  
(715) 635-4460 - Main  
(715) 635-4464 Fax

### SENIOR CENTERS DINING & ACTIVITIES

**DINING:** Congregate dining is available at four nutrition sites in Washburn County, Wisconsin: Birchwood, Minong, Shell Lake, and Spooner. Participants can enjoy affordable, nutritionally balanced meals in a welcoming environment, where they can socialize and participate in community activities.

**SERVING TIMES:** Serving hours vary by site. Call ahead to make meal reservations: Reservations are required

24 hours in advance at the following sites:

**BIRCHWOOD WASHBURN COUNTY WELLNESS CENTER 50+**  
110 Euclid Ave., Birchwood, WI 54817  
(715) 354-3001  
Serving M-F, 11:30 am

**MINONG AREA 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 offer participants many chances to connect with longtime friends and make new ones. Please see the enclosed activity calendars/news

for each location.

**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:** Must meet guidelines to qualify for Home Delivered Meals. For more details, contact the Nutrition Program Director at 715-635-4460.

## HOLIDAY RECIPE

## A SWEET SIDE TO PASS AROUND THE HOLIDAY DINNER TABLE

Despite their name, side dishes have a tendency to take center stage come the holiday season. That's particularly true when hosting a potluck-style dinner for family and friends. Such an arrangement, which typically sees hosts prepare the main course and guests bring side dishes and desserts, can remove a lot of responsibility from hosts' shoulders and afford them more time to mingle with their loved ones.

Those tasked with crafting a delicious side this holiday season can build their offering around a popular and seasonal main ingredient like sweet potatoes. This recipe for "Sweet Potato Mash" from Lines+Angles fits that bill and is sure to please everyone around the holiday dinner table this year.

## Sweet Potato Mash

Serves 4

4 large sweet potatoes, peeled  
Salt  
4 tablespoons butter  
1 sprig coriander, or parsley  
Freshly ground pepper and salt

1. Cut the potatoes into large chunks and cook in boiling salted water until tender, about 14 to 18 minutes.
2. Drain thoroughly, then set the pan over a low heat and shake the pan to drive off any excess moisture.
3. Mash thoroughly with the butter until smooth, then season generously with salt and pepper and serve with a garnish of coriander.



## HAPPY DAY CLUB NEWS

**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 715-934-9279 or email [happydayclub65@gmail.com](mailto: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 715-934-9279 or email [happydayclub65@gmail.com](mailto:happydayclub65@gmail.com) with any questions you may have.

## INDIGO NEWS

## COLD WEATHER ACTIVITY

## SUBMITTED BY DON POSH

IndiGO Your Allies for Independence

Here it comes again. As we leave the beauty of fall, what's next? Well, you know, winter. Some of us would like to be like a bear and hibernate until spring. Others look forward to winter as a time to take part in winter activities. We do host The American Birkebeiner, ice fishing contests and winter festivals.

As I travel around the northland, I see you out there walking, running, biking and getting needed exercise. During COVID many more people began to do these activities and have stuck with it. Some of us walk no matter what weather and fat tire bikes allow biking in the snow.

What do you do if that's just not for you? One thing we don't want to do is let ourselves lose all we gained from our good weather activities. So, can we consider some alternatives? If you're a bike rider, a stationary bike may prove to be a solution and a treadmill can take place of your walk until the weather suits you. While considering buying any type of workout equipment, you may want to try used. Should you find you're not using it, you can resell it and not take a huge financial loss. You'll know if it is time to get rid of it as soon as it begins to look like a clothes rack. If you have stairs, taking a few trips up and down until you feel winded is good exercise and it's fast and free. It helps to pump your blood into your brain and throughout your body. The same goes for dancing, whether at home or out for some fun. If home is not the place for you to get some exercise benefit, check with a local gym, YMCA and Senior Centers often offer exercise programs.

Exercise offers benefits that affect quality of life and extend our time with the ones we love.

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.



## Boost Your Brain and Memory

Boost Your Brain and Memory was designed to help participants implement new habits to maintain cognitive health while also practicing new skills for better memory performance.



This program has 6 sessions.

**WHEN:** Tuesdays starting November 4th  
11:00am - 12:00pm

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

**Attendance is FREE,  
(but space is limited)**  
Please call or email Patryce to register.  
715.635.4477  
[pgarcia@co.washburn.wi.us](mailto:pgarcia@co.washburn.wi.us)

## SENIOR CENTER NEWS

### MINONG AREA SENIOR CENTER

700 Houston Street, Minong | 715.466.4448  
**NUTRITION SITE MANAGER:**  
 LAURA GOMEZ - 715-466-4448  
**PRESIDENT: POLLY LEINWANDER**

**POLLY LEINWANDER**  
**MASC President**  
 Minong Area Senior Center

Monday, November 3rd, at Dining at Five, we celebrated Thanksgiving. The tables were decorated with orange tablecloths, faux gourds, pumpkins, and a centerpiece of a glass jar with fairy lights. On the tables were small sticky notes designed as gift boxes. Laura asked that everyone write on these sticky notes what their Gift is to Others. Those participating re-

ceived a pen and a bookmark with the words Grateful, Thankful, and Blessed. Birthdays for the month were acknowledged with a cookie and the Birthday song.

The main event for Dining at Five is dinner, sponsored by the Aging and Disability Resource Center Nutrition Program. Our site manager plans the monthly Dining at Five menu and prepares all the food for the evening. Keeping with the Thanksgiving theme, everyone enjoyed the delicious home-style turkey with gravy, Mashed Potatoes, Stuffing, Green Beans, and Cranberries. It wouldn't be Thanksgiving without Pumpkin Pie with a cinnamon topping for dessert.

We are truly Grateful, Thankful, and blessed to the Aging and Disability Nutrition Program, kitchen staff, volunteers, and all those attending. They made this a memorable evening. The evening ended with our signature bingo game.

Many hours of preparation have gone into hosting the Minong Area Senior Center's largest fundraiser for the year. The fundraiser starts at noon on Sat-

urday, November 22nd, with Free Food, followed by Bingo, a Basket Raffle, a Big-Ticket Raffle, and a Silent Auction. Tickets are available at the center and the day of the event. It's a great afternoon of Fun with Friends and helps to support our Senior Center. Thank you in advance to all who donated baskets and items for the silent auction, purchased tickets, bid on items, and volunteered. This would not be possible without all of YOU!

Plans are underway for the Annual Christmas Party for the Northwood School Children. This will be held on Thursday, December 11th. I was informed that SANTA will be there so that the children will be sooo excited.

The December Potluck/Bingo will be on Saturday, December 13th.

We are also planning the Christmas bags for the homebound participants. This is such a worthy project that the Minong Area Senior Centers has been doing for some years. If you would like to help or donate, please get in touch with Polly at 715-466-5298

## ADRC EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

### EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY: DINING SITE MANAGER/COOK MINONG, WI

The ADRC of Washburn County is accepting applications for the Minong Dining Site Manager/Cook position at the Minong Area Senior Center. Under the general direction and supervision of the Nutrition Program Director, the Dining Site Manager/Cook is responsible for coordinating the nutritional services for the Minong dining site and preparing meals for the congregate and home-delivered nutrition programs. The Dining Site Manager/Cook actively supervises the safe and sanitary service of meals and all other related nutrition program activities and performs related work as required by the State of Wisconsin Nutrition Services Aging Operations Manual. This position requires understanding and sensitivity to the needs of older Americans. Extensive knowledge of quantity and quality food preparation and sanitation is essential.

The starting salary range is \$31,824.00 - \$35,353.50 annually, depending on qualifications.

To apply, contact the Washburn County Personnel Department at P.O. Box 337, Shell Lake, WI 54871,

phone 715-468-4624, fax 715-468-4628, or apply online at: <https://www.governmentjobs.com/careers/washburncowi>?

Resumes are accepted, but do not replace a completed application. Applications will be reviewed until the position is filled. EOE.

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**EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY**  
 ADRC of Washburn County LTE Senior Dining Site Manager/Sub-Cook  
 Salary \$7,297.28 Annually  
 Location: Washburn County Senior Centers  
 Job Type: Casual / LTE  
 Department: ADRC of Washburn County  
 Opening Date: 10/02/2025

THIS IS A SHARED POSITION. 436 hours annually to be divided between candidates hired within this sub-cook list.

This position performs the duties as the Dining Site Manager / Cook in an LTE or Substitute manner when needed. Under the general direction and supervision of the Nutrition Program Director, the Dining Site Manager / Cook is responsible for coordinating the nutritional services for the dining site and pre-

paring meals for the congregate and home-delivered nutrition programs. The Dining Site Manager/Cook actively supervises the safe and sanitary service of meals and all other related nutrition program activities and performs related work as required by the State of Wisconsin Nutrition Services Aging Operations Manual. This position requires understanding and sensitivity to the needs of older Americans. Extensive knowledge of quantity and quality food preparation and sanitation is essential.

To apply, go to: <https://www.governmentjobs.com/careers/washburncowi>?

If you have additional questions about what the position entails or would like a tour of the facilities, please get in touch with the Nutrition Director, Char Mickelson, at 715-635-4460. Download an employment application from the Washburn County website [www.co.washburn.wi.us](http://www.co.washburn.wi.us), or contact the Washburn County Personnel Department at P.O. Box 337, Shell Lake, WI, 54871, Ph. 715-468-4624, fax 715-468-4628, or by email at [adminper@co.washburn.wi.us](mailto:adminper@co.washburn.wi.us). Resumes will be accepted but will not replace a completed application. The position remains open until it is filled. EOE.

## WASHBURN COUNTY TRANSIT

### WASHBURN COUNTY TRANSIT: CALL 715-635-4465 for Reservations Serving Washburn County adults age 60+, accompanying caregivers, and adults with disabilities.

The ADRC of Washburn County manages the 85.21 DOT transportation program. We have drivers and vehicles available to pick you up at your home and take you to and from your destination. Rides are offered Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. We ask that you make your reservations at least 48 hours in advance or as soon as you know you'll need a ride. Our schedule fills up quickly; we have a limited number of vehicles and drivers. Please consider sharing a ride with a friend if possible and

combining multiple stops into one day to give others a chance for transportation. Animals are not allowed in vehicles. If you have a certified service animal, don't hesitate to get in touch with the office for more information.

- Medical appointments in and out of Washburn County for Non-Medicaid enrollees (as they have a transportation benefit through the State of WI
- Shopping for groceries or other necessities
- Pharmacy, hardware, clothing, and other essentials.
- Hairdresser
- Church
- Library
- Meal site or restaurant
- Social activities

- Visit a friend at their home or other location

The ADRC has three types of vehicles available for use.

1. We have easy-to-enter cars used for long-distance travel or short trips for one or two people within Washburn County.
2. We have an ADA-accessible van for transporting people in wheelchairs.
3. We have a transit van used for transporting groups of up to 12 people. Do you have a qualified group of people interested in organizing a day trip together? This transit van is also used each Friday to take groups on shopping trips to Rice Lake, where they visit various businesses throughout the town.

## SENIOR NEWS

## SNOW REMOVAL SAFETY TIPS

By the GWAAR Legal Services Team  
(for reprint)

As we approach this very long Wisconsin winter, it is important to remember some tips to keep you safe when shoveling or using a snowblower to remove snow. During winter, there is always a risk of slipping and falling on ice. It is especially dangerous when that ice is hidden underneath freshly fallen snow. Shoveling heavy snow can also cause back, shoulder, knee and other orthopedic injuries.

Additionally, shoveling or pushing a snow blower can cause a sudden increase in blood pressure and heart rate, and the cold air can cause constriction of the blood vessels and decrease oxygen to the heart. All of these factors can increase strain on the heart and can trigger a potentially fatal heart attack.

### SAFETY TIPS TO HELP PREVENT FALLS & ORTHOPEDIC INJURIES:

See what you are shoveling/snow blowing. Make sure that your hat or scarf does not block your vision. Watch for ice patches and uneven surfaces. Avoid falls by wearing shoes or boots that have slip-resistant soles. Watch for black ice and ice under freshly fallen snow, and "walk like a penguin" until you are sure that the surface where you are walking is not icy.

Use a shovel that is comfortable for your height and strength. Do not use a shovel that is too heavy or too long for you. Consider buying a shovel that is specially designed to prevent too much stooping. Space your hands on the tool grip to increase your leverage.

Warm up your muscles. Shoveling can be a vigorous activity. Before you begin, warm up your muscles for 10 minutes with light exercise.

When possible, push the snow instead of lifting it. If you must lift, take small amounts of snow, and lift it with your legs: Squat with your legs apart, knees bent and back straight. Lift by straightening your legs, without bending at the waist. Then walk to where you want to dump the snow; holding a shov-



FILE PHOTO

elful of snow with your arms outstretched puts too much weight on your spine.

Do not throw the snow over your shoulder or to the side. This requires a twisting motion that stresses your back.

### SAFETY TIPS TO HELP PREVENT HEART ATTACKS:

Check with your doctor. Because this activity places high stress on the heart, speak with your physician first. If you have a medical condition or do not exercise regularly, consider hiring someone to remove the snow.

Talk to your doctor about an aspirin regimen or ask your doctor about taking a low dose of aspirin before you shovel.

Dress appropriately. Light, layered, water-repellent clothing provides both ventilation and insulation. It is also important to wear the appropriate head coverings, as well as mittens or gloves and thick, warm socks. Cover your mouth to help prevent breathing cold air. Take a break if you feel yourself getting too hot or too cold.

Clear snow early and often. Begin when a light covering of snow is on the ground to avoid trying to clear packed, heavy snow. However, avoid shoveling immediately after you awaken as most heart attacks

occur early in the morning when blood is more prone to clotting. Wait for at least 30 minutes and warm up your muscles before starting by walking for a few minutes or marching in place.

Pace yourself. Take frequent breaks and replenish fluids to prevent dehydration. If you experience chest pain, shortness of breath or other signs of a heart attack, seek emergency care.

Do not eat a heavy meal before or soon after shoveling because blood gets diverted from the heart to the stomach and can put extra strain on the heart.

Do not drink coffee or smoke for at least one hour before or one hour after shoveling or during breaks. These are stimulants and elevate your blood pressure and heart rate.

Do not drink alcohol before or immediately after shoveling. Alcohol can increase a person's sensation of warmth and may cause you to underestimate the extra strain your body is under in the cold.

Watch for warning signs of a heart attack: light-headedness, dizziness, being short of breath, or if you have tightness or burning in your chest, neck, arms or back. If you think you are having a heart attack, call 911.

### SAFETY TIPS FOR USING A SNOWBLOWER:

Never stick your hands or feet in the snow blower. If snow becomes too impacted, stop the engine and wait at least five seconds. Use a solid object to clear wet snow or debris from the chute. Beware of the recoil of the motor and blades after the machine has been turned off.

Do not leave the snow blower unattended when it is running. Shut off the engine if you must walk away from the machine.

Watch the snow blower cord. If you are operating an electric snow blower, be aware of where the power cord is at all times, so you do not trip and fall.

Add fuel before starting the snow blower. Never add fuel when the engine is running or hot. Do not operate the machine in an enclosed area.

Read the instruction manual. Prior to using a snow blower, read the instruction manual for specific safety hazards, unfamiliar features, and whenever attempting to repair or maintain the snow blower.

## ADRC OF WASHBURN COUNTY EVENTS CALENDAR

### DECEMBER

**Monday, December 1, 2025** – Alzheimer's Caregiver Support Group led by the ALZ Asso. 9-10 a.m. Spooner Trinity Lutheran Church

**Monday, December 1, 2025** - Minong Dining @ 5 is CANCELLED. Local participants will be notified when the event is rescheduled. Please watch our Facebook Page for more information.

**Tuesday, December 2, 2025** – Dementia Friendly Community Training 3-4 p.m. – Shell Lake Library – no registration required.

**Friday, December 5, 2025** – Washburn County Transit Van Shopping Trip to Rice Lake. Call (715) 635-4465 for a reservation; space is limited. Washburn residents age 60+ & adults with disabilities.

**Tuesday, December 9, 2025** – Memory Café - 2-3 p.m., Spooner Trinity Lutheran Church

**Monday, December 8, 2025** - Shell Lake Dining @ 5

**Wednesday, December 10, 2025** – ADRC Committee Meeting 11:00 p.m. at the Washburn County Board Room, Shell Lake.

**Wednesday, December 10, 2025** – Washburn County Caregiver Coalition, ADRC Office South Conference Room, 2:30-3:30 p.m. The public is welcome to join!

**Friday, December 12, 2025** – Washburn County Transit Van Shopping Trip to Rice Lake. Call (715) 635-4465 for a reservation; space is limited. Washburn residents age 60+ & adults with disabilities.

**Monday, December 15, 2025** - Spooner Dining @ 5

**Friday, December 19, 2025** – Washburn County Transit Van Shopping Trip to Rice Lake. Call (715) 635-4465 for a reservation; space is limited. Washburn residents age 60+ & adults with disabilities.

**Tuesday, December 23, 2025** – Birchwood Senior Center Dining @ 5

**Wednesday, December 24, 2025** – CLOSED for Christmas Eve – ADRC & Meal Sites, No Meals Delivered.

**Thursday, December 25, 2025** – CLOSED for Christmas Day – ADRC & Meal Sites, No Meals Delivered.

**Friday, December 26, 2025** –

- The Meal Sites will be CLOSED & there will be NO Meals Delivered.
- The ADRC Office WILL be open.
- There will be NO Washburn County Transit Van Shopping Trip to Rice Lake this Friday.

**Thursday, January 1, 2026** = CLOSED – HAPPY NEW YEAR'S EVE!

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 (Spooner)  
West Side Manor (Shell Lake) • Birch Haven Manor (Birchwood)

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

THIS INSTITUTION IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY PROVIDER AND EMPLOYER

## CHICOG - THEN AND NOW

SUBMITTED BY  
**JOANN MALEK**

Etta Mae Rothenbuhler called to tell me of grandfathers who homesteaded in the area. Samuel and Martha Stoneback came to Chicog in 1886 and applied to homestead on Bramer Road. Gustaff Bramer, from Germany, lived across the way. William and Mary Frances Mack came by conestoga wagon in 1899 and settled in Brooklyn. When they completed homestead requirements they received a patent letter of approval signed by President Grover Cleveland. The Homestead Act of 1862, sanctioned by Abraham Lincoln, has been called one of the most important pieces of legislation in U.S. history. Adult heads of families, at least 21 years of age, were granted 160 acres of surveyed land for a minimal filing fee and five years of continuous residence. Approximately 270 million acres, 10% of the entire U.S., were claimed by private citizens, a revolutionary concept for distributing public land.

Acquisition of the Public Domain: "The richest free gift that was ever spread before civilized man." Francis Jackson Turner. Homesteaders were required to live on the land, build a home, cultivate and raise crops, graze animals, make improvements. The patent they received represented hard work and determination.

The Bureau of Land Management records 30,000 total homestead entries in Wisconsin from 1868-1961.

The Stoneback family lived in a small house while Samuel built their large log home. He pulled balsam logs from the swamp and cleared the land north along the lake, called Stunce Lake at that time. Later he donated land for the Chicog cemetery. Etta Mae was born in that house in 1932 to parents Gilbert and Etta May (Stoneback) Mack.

Tell me about your grandparents, I asked. Her grandpa Stoneback was a mail carrier. Etta Mae knew only one, her grandma Martha, who was "lively, even at 82. She had her own animals, milked for herself, kept her fire." A nighttime fall resulted in a broken hip. She was found the next morning and hospitalized but eventually succumbed to pneumonia. "I was 8 years old when she died, and was given a small Martha Washington cup with her birth and death years. I had that keepsake for a long time but it's gone now."

Tell us about your childhood in Chicog. The youngest of eleven children, "I was the baby doll. My sisters curled my hair and painted my nails." Some siblings were married with families. Nieces and nephews were her classmates. Her father, Gilbert, built their family home on the west side of Bramer Road. "A spring in

the creek in front of the house was our source for water. We would wrap food and preserve it in the cold water. We'd swim in the creek, too. At the bend in Stuntz Brook there was a puddle deep enough to dip in. Oh, it was cold!"

High bush cranberries grew along the river. "We stood in the wet bog to pick them. Mother stored cranberries on the stairway; we'd take a handful, and a little salt, on our way up to bed. Chicog is also blueberry country. We picked them to eat and to sell for a penny a quart. Our farm had cows, pigs, sheep, chickens, horses used for plowing. I always had one special horse to ride. When an old horse wandered off and died, my brothers dug a horse-shaped grave right there and rolled her in."

Tell us about the schools. "There were eight grades together in the one-room schools, perhaps 4-5 students per grade. We began the day with the pledge of allegiance. Then, one by one, classes were called to the front to sit in a circle with the teacher and recite their lessons. Back at our desks, the rest of us listened and probably learned."

"We brought our bag lunches. There was a nice grove of trees outside. Across from the school was a field and lowland swamp where we played and could sled or ski. I remember baseball games, boys and girls



SUBMITTED PHOTO

of all ages included. We didn't fight. We were friends. On holidays we put on programs." Parents and siblings would crowd into the small schoolroom to watch. Aunt Cora boarded Stuncebrook teachers including Edna Evenson, from Minong, who taught for four years in a row. "She was a good teacher and kept everyone under control. Some teachers couldn't manage the older boys." One male, Elliot Chappel, who had been in the service, was a tough teacher and able to keep the boys in line.

Etta Mae went to Tadpole School for one-half year while the family lived next door. At the end of school each day that winter she would sled down 'tadpole hill' to her home. After moving back to Chicog Etta Mae attended Stuncebrook School, just a half-mile from their house. Everyone

walked to school; some had almost two miles. When it snowed her father would walk the trail to make a path for her. Later she went to Twin Lake School, the old fire department building that stood on the site of the present Chicog town hall.

"Wherever I went, I walked. My father had a car but gas was difficult to procure." She walks still. When we met at the Spooner library on a rainy autumn day, sure enough, Etta Mae had walked over.

*Thank you for reading Chicog-Then and Now*

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## SENIOR NEWS

### RESEARCHING LONG-TERM CARE FACILITIES

By the GWAAR Legal Services Team (for reprint)

Thinking about having to leave your home or find a suitable place to trust with the care of a spouse or other loved one can be daunting. It is easy to want to avoid the issue until it's a pressing matter, when it can be too late to do your research and try to find the best fit. Here are some tips for researching potential facilities, and questions to think about when visiting.

- Keep in mind that you may be getting a tour from or meeting with a marketing person, whose job is to sell the facility to you. They may not know specifics regarding health care and finances. Ask to speak to someone with that knowledge before making any decisions.

- Is the facility publicly or privately owned? Changes in ownership can cause changes in practices at the

facility. You can't assume that the way something is at the time you are considering a facility is the way it will remain for the duration of your/your loved one's stay.

- Your/your loved one's needs may change over time. A Community-Based Residential Facility (CBRF) may initially be appropriate, but if medical issues develop or progress, a Skilled Nursing Facility may be needed. Think about how you would transition if need be and ask the facility how they would handle increasing care needs.

- Ask the facility how they deal with conflict. What situations might cause them to ask someone to leave? What would that procedure look like? Would you get a refund of any funds paid in advance that weren't used?

- Don't rely on verbal assurances. Make sure to get things in writing that you are relying on when choosing a facility.

- Make use of Wisconsin's circuit court access tool

(CCAP) <https://wcca.wicourts.gov>. Wisconsin Circuit Court Access allows you to search for a person or business to see legal proceedings. It's helpful to know if there are small claims, larger lawsuits, or bankruptcies involving a facility you're interested in. These may be red flags. Note that this issue can be complicated – the facility name may not bring up anything because it is owned by a larger entity. Inquire about the ownership structure of the facility to better assist your research.

- Consult a financial planner and/or estate attorney if you have questions about your private funds interacting with Medicaid. Don't rely on advice from long-term care facility staff regarding spending your personal money vs. using government funding.

- For additional information and resources, visit How To Choose a Nursing Home or Other Long-Term Care Facility | National Institute on Aging: <https://www.nia.nih.gov/health/assisted-living-and-nursing-homes/how-choose-nursing-home-or-other-long-term-care-facility>.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

## SENIOR NEWS

### MEDICARE COVERAGE OF AMBULANCE SERVICES

By the GWAAR Legal Services Team (for reprint)

If you ever find yourself experiencing a medical emergency, you may need to call an ambulance. You may also need medical transport via ambulance between two different medical providers. But how do you know if Original Medicare or your Medicare Advantage plan will cover the charges?

#### CRITERIA FOR AN EMERGENCY CALL

You can get emergency ambulance transportation when you've had a sudden medical emergency and your health is in serious danger because you can't be safely transported by other means, like by car or taxi. Even if a car or taxi is not available to transport you, if you could have safely taken that mode of transportation, Medicare will not cover the ambulance services. The ambulance must also transport you to the nearest appropriate facility, usually a hospital. If

you call an ambulance but are not transported, Medicare will not cover the cost of the ambulance call. If you are not transported to the nearest appropriate facility, Medicare will not cover the extra mileage to that facility. The nearest appropriate facility means that the institution is generally equipped to provide the needed hospital or skilled nursing care for the illness or injury involved. For example, someone with end-stage renal disease may need to be transported to a hospital that has dialysis capabilities.

#### CRITERIA FOR FACILITY-TO-FACILITY TRANSPORT

You may be able to get emergency or non-emergency ambulance transportation from one medical facility to another if you need it to treat or diagnose your health condition and the use of any other transportation method could endanger your health. In some cases, Medicare may cover limited, medically necessary, non-emergency ambulance transportation if your doctor writes an order stating that ambulance transportation is necessary due to your medical condition. Even if a situation isn't an emergency, ambu-

lance transportation may be medically necessary to get you to a hospital or other covered health facility. For example, someone needing a specialized kind of surgery may need to be transported to the nearest facility that has the required specialist on staff. Again, if you are transported to a facility farther away, Medicare will not pay for that extra mileage.

\*Note: if you have a Medicare Advantage plan, it must cover at least what Original Medicare covers, but it may provide additional coverage. For information about that coverage, see your plan's evidence of coverage or contact your plan directly.

If you end up with ambulance services that have been denied, you have the option to appeal. For Original Medicare, you follow the appeal procedures outlined in your Medicare Summary Notice (MSN). For Medicare Advantage appeals, you will follow the appeal procedures outlined in your explanation of benefits (EOB). For assistance with these appeals, you may reach out to your local Elder Benefit Specialist (EBS). To find the EBS in your area, visit: <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/benefit-specialists/counties.htm>.

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**CONTACT:** Spooner Health  
Rehabilitation Services  
715.939.1745

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- Games & activities to help engage and promote mobility
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- Guest speakers sharing information on power mobility, planning for future, speech therapy, chair yoga, medication management, etc.

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