

Focus for *Life*



A SPECIAL SECTION OF THE FOUR SEASONS/ WEEKENDER NORTH

VOLUME 34 ISSUE 2

FEBRUARY 2026

Sharing the love and sending warm wishes ❤️



These blankets were collected with love from the community for people receiving Home Delivered Meals. The Washburn County ADRC & The Subaru Share the Love Program wish you all a lovely February!



WELCOME TRAVIS FOUNTAINE

Travis Fountaine Community Health Worker



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Travis Fountaine

Travis Fountaine is the Community Health Worker for the Washburn County Aging & Disability Resource Center (ADRC). He brings a diverse background in public service, community engagement, and leadership to this role. Prior to joining Washburn County, Travis served as a Park Property Manager and Case Manager for St. Croix County, where he supported individuals and families while helping steward community resources. Earlier in his career, he worked as a YMCA camp director in Minnesota, fostering youth development, teamwork, and a strong connection to the outdoors.

Originally from Central Michigan, Travis now lives in rural Barronett, where he enjoys the close-knit feel of rural

communities. In his free time, he can often be found canoeing, reading science fiction, or watching Star Trek with his son. Travis is excited to take on the new challenge of serving as a Community Health Worker and looks forward to building relationships and spending meaningful time in the Washburn County community.

NEW SITE MANAGER/COOK FOR MINONG

Darren Putushek Site Manager/Cook Minong, WI



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Darren Putushek

While growing up in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, I would come home from grade school and watch Graham Kerr, The Galloping Gourmet and just be fascinated by the stories he would tell and the dishes he would make, they always looked so fancy and delicious. I knew when I got older, I wanted to be able to cook like that. My first job was cooking at Red Lobster on Mayfair Rd. in Wauwatosa, Wisconsin in 1984. Then in 1988 I attended Baltimore's International Culinary Arts College in Baltimore Maryland. I graduated from there in June of 1990 with an Associate of Arts Degree in Culinary Arts. Since graduating in 1990 I've worked in Baltimore, Milwaukee, Ironwood, Minocqua, East Troy, just to name

a few. I've run restaurants and kitchens. I was a commercial baker for Brownberry Ovens for 8 ½ years. I've always done something food related for work most of the time working two jobs at a time. I'm happiest when I'm working. No matter what I do in life I always go back to the kitchen. My favorite part of cooking is creativity; I love to create. With this new position as Site Manager/Cook for the Minong Senior Center I get some creative autonomy with the Dining at 5. I'm looking forward to making some delicious dishes of my own creation for the seniors here in Minong.

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 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." 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.

The Screenings Are Simple

THE PEACE OF MIND IS PRICELESS



SCHEDULE YOUR COLONOSCOPY TODAY

Colonoscopies play a vital role in protecting your long-term health, allowing your provider to screen for and remove colon polyps. This simple and safe procedure is the most effective way to detect issues early – often before symptoms appear – and prevent them from progressing.

Our compassionate team will guide you through every step of the process and address any concerns you may have. Make a plan to protect your health and schedule your colonoscopy with us today.



To learn more, call 715-939-1643 or visit SpoonerHealth.com.

DRIVERS NEEDED



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Washburn County Transit is in need of volunteer drivers for the Transportation Program of the Aging and Disability Resource Center of Washburn County, Wisconsin.

Washburn County Transit provides transportation for anyone over the age of 60 and/or who has disabilities.

We provide transportation to non-emergency medical appointments, local shopping trips, and other social activities.

If you are interested in learning more about our program and how you can become a volunteer and make a difference within our community, please contact Angie at the Washburn County ADRC 715-635-4465.

LINDA HAND RETIREMENT

SUBMITTED BY **JOE HOY**

District 14 Supervisor
Washburn County, Wisconsin

Washburn County ADRC congratulates Director Linda Hand on her retirement. Ms. Hand has served our seniors with dedication and skill for seven years, achieving these notable milestones:

- Opening of Spooner Wellness Center 50+
- Summer Social Dinner & Concert Series
- Bringing in external funds via grant

writing

- Senior nutrition program, including Dining at 5 and Senior dining and home-delivered meals
- Managing the ADRC Transit, a monthly FOCUS newspaper, and Senior Centers with four outlets

The ADRC committee, staff, and all of Washburn County express our thanks to her and wish her well on her next journey.

Submitted by: Joe Hoy,
ADRC Committee Chair

WHITE TEA WITH BERRIES RECIPE

WHITE TEA WITH BERRIES

White tea offers antioxidants and anti-inflammatory properties with little caffeine.

INGREDIENTS

1 cup mixed berries, such as blueberries and strawberries
2 bags white tea
Cold water

INSTRUCTIONS

Wash berries thoroughly.
Quarter strawberries, leaving other berries whole.

Add tea bags and cover with water.

Infuse in the fridge for several hours, or until tea has brewed.

<https://www.aplaceformom.com/caregiver-resources/articles/easy-recipes-for-senior-nutrition>



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/>

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 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.

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) • Darren Putushek (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

ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS FOR • Substitute Cooks

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES FOR:

- Citizens' ADRC Governing Board
- Meals on Wheels Delivery Drivers
- Drivers
- Kitchen Assistance at Meal Sites
- Office Help
- Health Promotion Leaders
- Activity & Educational Presentation Facilitators

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

Have you ever lost your marbles? I have! A wooden board game at my house is called "Dirty Marbles." It's a game similar to the game "Sorry." After we played it I left it set up. WELL, along comes my cat, Ernie. He must play for the Twins cause he went to bat during the night. His fastpitch paw made each

marble a fly ball. I'm still looking for my marbles.
Our January Dining @ 5 featured fortune cookies - so appropriate as we all hope for good fortune in the new year and especially at bingo. We welcome the return of regularly scheduled activities at the center, unless a snowstorm postponed them.. Thank you to those who helped with holiday decorations and storing them for next year.
What's better than a nice warm noon meal on a cold winter's day?

On December 18th we enjoyed a Christmas Dinner with special placemats drawn by Spooner school kids. Mine had bees on it and said "Bee Yourself" so I will be myself...a good new year's resolution. Remember to call the day before to make reservations for lunch.
Claudia Broz recapped the trip to the Mannheim Steamroller concert for me. She said the group and the bus driver blended so well, even navigating the slow traffic past the Bentlyville light display. At least the group got to see the display from the warm bus! She said the concert seats were good and the music was grrrrrrrrreat!
There were lots of community events in the last weeks of 2025: the Intermezzo Music Club Concert; Christmas show at the Ceska Opera House; a Mistletoe Dance at

the casino in Turtle Lake; cookie walks; programs at churches with candlelight; family get togethers-but the shenanigans at the December Dining @ 5 topped them all. Who knew Santa was going to burst into the room to read the "Night Before Christmas" to the world's oldest, thumb sucking kid in her pajamas! The music by Bob Seckora and family, the audience carolers, the holiday mocktails and a special dinner menu were also enjoyed. We voted for the ugliest Christmas attire. Tom wore a crazy suit coat and tie. Gary wore a sweater with a lama on it. I'm looking forward to February as I soak in the last of the holidays, the soft mornings, the slower paceas I plan my ATTACK on Valentine's Day.

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

Since we do not meet in December, I will try to recap the Center Happenings.
Our site manager, Hope, and members decorated for Thanks-

giving. We enjoyed, once again, seeing the things that we had packed away the previous fall. After Thanksgiving we brought in the tubs to repack the fall decorations until next year. Filled Christmas tubs were also brought in to begin decorating for the Christmas Season.

June and Diane set up the indoor tree and also put up the outdoor tree. The oldest Seniors, God bless them, opened the tubs, unpacked lights, balls, and garlands. They started decorating the tree while the "younger" Seniors of the group decorated windows, walls, and tables. In mid December the oranges we had ordered from the FFA arrived. The FFA refused to accept payment and donated the oranges to our Seniors. Hope, our site manager sent oranges to our Meals-on-Wheels Seniors as well as to all who came to the Center to eat. A Huge Thank You to all of the Shell Lake FFA members for your

generous gift.
The weather has made it difficult for people to attend the regular scheduled programs and we have needed to be flexible with quilting, games, Tai Chi, and cards. January still has weather problems but we are getting on with business. Valentines and a profusion of red will be the color of February.
Please call our Site Manager 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 the Nutrition Director at 715-635-4460.

MINONG 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

Hello from the Minong Area Senior Center,
As we welcome February, we realize that there are only a couple months of winter weather left; we can start thinking about spring. Not that I dislike winter, but this

is usually the time of the year I'm ready to put it behind me. The rush and excitement of the Holidays are past and maybe it's the mid-winter blues settling in. Regardless of the time of the season, the Minong Area Senior Center is a great place to set those winter blues aside! Get out and meet people, make new friends, join in a congregate meal and share your stories, play cards or Farkle on Tuesdays, Crib-

bage on Thursdays, or the monthly Potluck/Bingo on the 2nd Saturday monthly at noon. As we age, life changes and so does our new circle of friends. Make it your 2026 resolution to get out, meet new people, join in activities, volunteer, and just have some FUN - at the Minong Area Senior Center!
Everyone has a story. For the past couple of years I've been writing the Focus article and struggling some months with what to write. Thinking its time for a change and to get a new perspective, each board member at the Minong Area Senior Center agreed to write a Focus article for future months. It's getting to know your

board members, why or when they started coming to the senior center, what do they participate in at the center, or maybe about an event at the center. Any story they would like to share. I'm looking forward to their stories.
The big event this February at the Senior Center is the monthly Potluck & Bingo. It's the Valentine's Bingo and special happening on February 14th. Potluck begins at noon, followed by a fun afternoon of Bingo. We hope to see you there!
Please check the Monthly Calendar for scheduled activities.
Happy Valentines Day to everyone.

SENIOR CENTERS & CHICOG ACTIVITY CALENDARS

BIRCHWOOD SENIOR CENTER: 715.354.3001

BIRCHWOOD - WASHBURN COUNTY
WELLNESS CENTER 50+
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..... 10:30 AM
TUESDAYS: Games..... 9:00 AM
Cribbage..... 10:30 AM
WEDNESDAYS: Games 9:00 AM
Quilting..... 9:00 AM
Smear 12:00 Noon.
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)

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
FRI. FEB. 6 First Friday Flick "Nuremberg"
EVERY 3rd FRI:
Savvy Senior Book Club..... 10:30 AM

MINONG AREA SENIOR CENTER: 715.466.4448

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

TUESDAYS:

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
SATURDAYS: 2nd Saturday each month (some
exceptions - will be advertised if changed)
Potluck..... NOON
Bingo..... 1:00 PM

FEBRUARY HIGHLIGHTS:

MON FEB 2:..... DINING @ 5
WED FEB 11: Minong Area Senior Center
Board Meeting..... 1:00 PM
SAT FEB 14: Valentines Day
Potluck/Bingo NOON

CHICOG IMPORTANT DATES

WEDNESDAY, 2/11 Monthly Meeting 6 PM
WEDNESDAYS, 2/11 & 25
Namekagen Transit Service
THURSDAY, 2/12 Bibliodragon Bookmobile,
Town Hall (Bookmobile routes are cancelled
when there's a "feel like" temperature of 20
degrees or lower) 10:30 AM-12
WEDNESDAY, 2/25 Books & Bread,
Beaverbrook..... 10:30 AM - 2 PM
THURSDAYS, Weekly Walkabout
Pot Lucks, Town Hall 10:30-2:30
Town Website: www.townofchicog.com

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 can 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.

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 will be available. Call 715-934-9279 or email happydayclub65@gmail.com with any questions you may have.

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
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

FEBRUARY					LUNCH & HOME DELIVERED MEALS MENU				
MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY					
Cabbage Roll Casserole, Roasted Potato Wedges, Buttered Carrots, Marble Rye Bread, Peaches MINONG DINING AT 5 2	Black Bean Chicken Enchiladas with Refried Beans Spanish Rice Mexican Coleสลaw Fruit Salad 3	Brunch for Lunch Broccoli Parmesan Egg Bake Sausage Links V8 Vegetable Juice Buttermilk Biscuit Banana 4	Homemade Meatloaf Mashed Potatoes & Gravy Cranberry Spinach Salad Whole Grain Bread Apple Crisp 5	Strawberry Spinach Salad with Chicken, Cucumber & Tomato Dill Salad WG Breadstick Fresh Clementine 6					
Egg Salad with Leaf Lettuce on a WG Croissant, Apple-Cranberry Coleslaw 3 Bean Salad, Crisp Grapes, Cookie SHELL LAKE DINING AT 5 9	Pork Chop Suey over Brown Rice Egg Roll Crunchy Asian Slaw Mandarin Oranges Fortune Cookie 10	BBQ Ribs Baked Potato Buttered Green Beans Whole Grain Bread Berries with Whippe Cream 11	Oven Roasted Turkey California Medley Vegetables Baked Sweet Potato Whole Grain Bread Cook's Choice Fruit 12	Classic Lasagna Garden Salad Dressing Buttered Peas WG Garlic Breadstick Chocolate Cherry Brownies 13					
HOLIDAY OBSERVANCE No Meals Served or Delivered 16	Seasoned Chicken Breast, Garlic Red Potatoes, Baked Beans, Whole Grain Bread, Cook's Choice Fruit SPOONER DINING AT 5 17	Sausage & Squash Stew Fresh Side Salad Whole Grain Bread Apricots 18	Loaded Chef Salad with Ham, Egg, Cheese, Veggies, Dressing WG Garlic Breadstick Strawberry Shortcake 19	Tuna Casserole Steamed Broccoli Apple-Cranberry Coleslaw Grapes Dinner Roll 20					
Scalloped Potatoes and Ham Casserole Green Beans Whole Grain Bread Pineapple 23	Tender Roast Beef Mashed Potatoes and Gravy Dill Carrots Whole Grain Bread Mixed Berry Crisp BIRCHWOOD DINING AT 5 24	Garlic Ginger Pork Loin with Broccoli over Asian Noodles Roasted Red Cabbage Mandarin Oranges 25	National Chili Day Chili-Stuffed Baked Potato with Cheddar Cheese & Sour Cream Broccoli-Cheddar Cornbread Pears 26	Fish Sandwich on WG Bun Butternut Mac n' Cheese Steamed Cauliflower Pistachio Fluff 27					

DINING @ 5

MINONG MENU
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 2nd
Stuffed Pork Loin, Roasted Carrots
Wild Rice Pilaf, Spinach Salad
Blueberry Cheesecake

SHELL LAKE MENU
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 9th
BBQ Chicken & Ribs, Baby Red Potatoes
Coleslaw, Dinner Roll
Red Velvet Cake

SPOONER MENU
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 17th
Baked Pork Chops, Scalloped Potatoes
Glazed Carrots, Side Salad
Dinner Roll, Chocolate Peanut Butter
Lava Cake

BIRCHWOOD MENU
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24th
Beef Stroganoff, Egg Noodles, Garden Salad
Fresh Baked Bread, Kristi's Choice Dessert

Suggested Contribution is \$9.00 - \$11.00
Cost: \$16.00 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,
Spooners, 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 \$7-\$9 per meal.**
~ **Individuals under the age of sixty are welcome, but must pay the full meal cost of \$16 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.

24/7, Confidential Crisis Support for Veterans and their Loved Ones

If you're a Veteran in crisis or concerned about one, reach caring trained responders 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
When you call the Veterans Crisis Line, here is what you can expect:

- A qualified responder will answer your call, ready to listen and help.
- The responder will ask a few

questions, such as whether your or the Veteran you're concerned about may be in immediate danger or at risk for suicide.

- The conversation is free and confidential, and you decide how much information to share.
- Support doesn't end with your conversation. Our responders can connect

you with the resources you need.
You don't have to be enrolled in VA benefits or health care to connect.
You're not alone - the **Veterans Crisis Line** is here for you

- Dial 988 then Press 1
- Chat online at VeteransCrisisLine.net/Chat
- Text 838255

- Scan the QR code to download Veterans Crisis Line resources

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs



Veterans Crisis Line
DIAL 988 then PRESS 1

CHICOG - THEN AND NOW

SUBMITTED BY
JOANN MALEK

Our Chicog world was covered with white over Thanksgiving weekend, 2025. It was a joy to wander on snowshoes through the stunning forest. Every flexible tree, bush, grass was bowed to the ground. A knock with my ski pole would bring the heavy snow down and send each stave back up. Repeating the action again and again allowed me to follow my trails. More of a problem were the fallen limbs, branches, and trees. But the beauty of snowshoeing is that I can walk anywhere!

Snowshoes have been around for thousands of years. They distribute body weight over a large surface so we can walk atop soft snow without sinking down. "Studies have proven that walking and running in snowshoes burns more calories than any other exercise known to the human race" according to the Northern Lights Newsletter. It seems to me that walking in deep snow without snowshoes would burn even more calories.

People of Central Asia (North-eastern Siberia) most likely first used snowshoes around 4000 B.C. Through the ages, in all parts of the world, unique varieties of snowshoes have been developed for winter survival.

For Ojibwa tribes in this area snowshoes were as necessary in winter as canoes in summer. "Ojibwa" (Ojibwe, Ojibwag, Ojibway) is the name given them by other Native American tribes. The name means "pucker" referring to their moccasin style, with toes sewn inward to keep snow out.

U.S. treaties referred to this group as Chippewa, dropping the "O" and saying "jibwa". The Ojibwa referred to themselves as "Anishinaabe" meaning original people

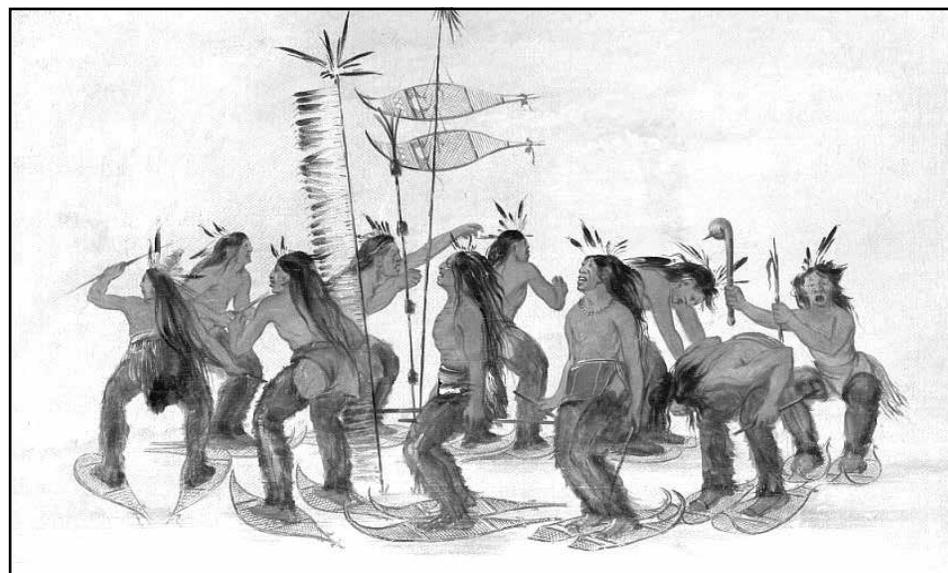
"Agin" is the Ojibwa word for snowshoe. The Ojibwa design incorporated qualities of lightness, strength, gracefulness. With long pointed tail and equally long, pointed, turned-up toe, the shoe could slide easily across snow and through brush.

To build these snowshoes, strips of green wood, most often white ash, were steamed or heated over the fire to soften. When pliable, the wood pieces would be carefully bent. The frame was strengthened with cross blocks. Decking was narrow strips of moose, deer, elk, caribou, or horse rawhide, woven together and tied



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Map showing the Migration of the Anishinabe



SUBMITTED PHOTO

George Catlin, Snowshoe Dance at the First Snowfall, 1835-1837, oil on canvas

to the frame. A leather wrap held the foot in place, usually a toe thong with an ankle loop that left the heel free. "Nind agimosse" means "I walk with snowshoes". The typical snowshoe walk is a long swinging gait, a swaying motion of the body.

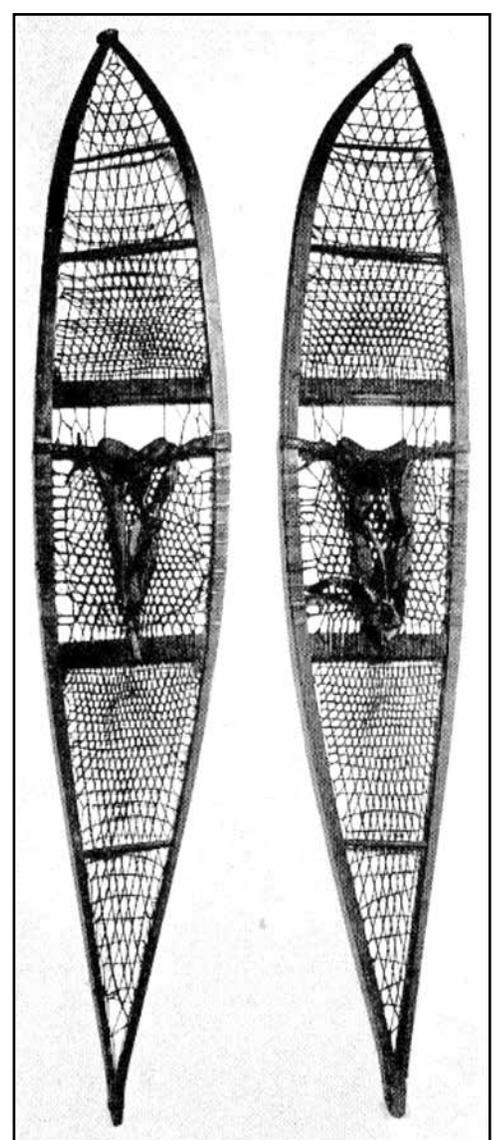
"Occasionally we find some article invented by man in a relatively primitive state, with the strain of necessity upon him, of such great perfection that modern ingenuity has been unable to improve upon it." *The Penn Museum Journal*. December, 1911.

The snowshoe dance is a traditional Ojibwe event. With a song of thanksgiving to Great Spirit for

sending a return of snow, hunters wearing snowshoes dance around a pair of snowshoes suspended from a tall pole. The dance is a request for successful hunting during the coming winter.

**Thank you for reading
*Chicog-Then and Now***

Town Website:
www.townofchicog.com
Do you have stories to tell about Chicog-Then? I'd like to listen.
Call or text me at
(612) 250-0301.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Chipewyan Indian (Athabaskan) snowshoe from Penn Museum



Take a NOURISH Step!



A Sweet Reminder This February: Check In on Prediabetes Risk



Did you Know?

80% of people with prediabetes don't know they have it!

What is Prediabetes?

Prediabetes is high blood sugar levels that don't quite meet the criteria for a diabetes diagnosis, but could mean a higher risk for diabetes in the future.

Prediabetes is identified by at least one of the following criteria:

- Fasting blood sugar of 100 mg/dL to 125 mg/dL
- A blood sugar of 140 mg/dL to to 199 mg/dL within 2-hours of a meal
- A1C of 5.7% to 6.4%



Why is it a big deal?

- People with prediabetes have a **50% risk of developing diabetes** within 5 years and have an **elevated risk** of developing:
 - Chronic kidney disease
 - Heart disease
 - Stroke
- Lifestyle changes and medications may have a big impact on reducing the risk of diabetes development in individuals with prediabetes.



Preventing and Managing Prediabetes

Exercising healthy eating, avoiding smoking, and managing blood pressure are reported to be the most effective lifestyle approaches for managing prediabetes and preventing type 2 diabetes.

Exercise: Engage in at least 150 minutes per week of a moderate activity such as walking.

Healthy Eating: Eat a variety of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean proteins, and healthy fats.

Healthy Habits: Avoid smoking, decrease alcohol consumption, and focus on water intake.

Managing Blood Pressure: Focus on a balanced diet, reduce salt intake, and manage stress levels.

Importance of Hydration

Staying hydrated helps maintain steady blood sugar levels.



*NOURISH stands for: Nutrient-Rich Foods, Omega-3s & Healthy Fats, Understand, Recipes, Increase Protein & Fiber, Sugar & Sodium Awareness, and Hydrate.

NOURISH

"Hearty" Oats w/Fruit

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 apple
- 2 cups nonfat or 1% milk or water
- 1 cup quick-cooking oats or old fashioned rolled oats
- 1/8 teaspoon salt (optional)
- 1/8 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1 tsp brown sugar or honey (optional)
- 1/8 teaspoon nutmeg (optional)

DIRECTIONS:

- Rinse the apple, remove the core and cut into small chunks.
- Bring the water or milk to a boil in a saucepan
- Add the oatmeal, salt and apple chunks.

Cook over medium heat for 1 minute if using quick cooking oats or 7 to 10 minutes if using old fashioned rolled oats.

Stir a couple of times while cooking.

- Remove from heat. Stir in cinnamon, brown sugar and nutmeg, if desired.
- Refrigerate leftovers within 2 hours.

VARIATIONS:

You can substitute any fruit. Add nuts, or nut or seed butter to increase protein

Recipe adapted from <https://foodhero.org/recipes/apple-spice-oatmeal>



Photo used with permission from <https://foodhero.org/recipes/apple-spice-oatmeal>

Quick Balance & Strength Test

TEST #1

- 30-second sit-to-stand test for strength
 - Sit mid-chair, feet flat, arms crossed over chest. Stand up and sit down repeatedly for 30 seconds.
- What to look for:
 - Typical: 10-19 reps
 - <10 reps = low strength



TEST #2

- One-leg balance test
 - Stand with hands on hips.
 - Lift one leg and hold as long as possible.
 - Record the best 3 attempts.
- What to look for:
 - Aim for around 15 seconds

**Keep taking NOURISH Steps
and learn more about prediabetes at
<https://doihaveprediabetes.org/>**

To learn skills, strategies, and view more resources, such as where you can find
Diabetes Prevention Programs in Wisconsin, please visit:
<https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/prediabetes/control.htm>



If you want more pep, take a NOURISH Step!
For more information visit: gwaar.org/nourishstep

GWAAR Nutrition Team. UW Health Interns Trinity Manzke & Molly Ross 2/2026



INDIGO NEWS

DON'T TELL ME

SUBMITTED BY **DON POSH**

IndiGO Your Allies for Independence



PHOTO SUBMITTED

Don Posh

As the major holidays fade, we're left with a traditional Wisconsin winter. But there is another holiday in January, Martin Luther King Day. To some it may be just another long weekend, but in the world of disability and aging it has so much significance. The short version is bringing a voice to the voiceless. His movement changed America. Many of the services like indiGO and the ADRC came out of advocacy of the disabled finding their voice. We would not have the Americans with Disability Act (ADA) which provided access to all government buildings and so much more. When people with disabilities got out of their wheelchairs and crawled up the Capitol steps proving they did not have equal access to our government, it pushed George H. W. Bush to sign the ADA into law. Examples of the ADA are right here, the curb cuts

on our downtown streets allow for wheelchairs, walkers, people that use canes access, just try to get a walker over a curb. The raised bumps help a person that is blind to navigate the crosswalk. If you are not using a walker, try to imagine how you open a door while maintaining your balance without automatic door openers. What about aging in place? Staying in your own home instead of a nursing home and receiving care where you're in control of the staff that assists you. These are just a small sample of examples.

Being voiceless is a choice. It does not serve us well to only voice our concerns with family, friends and neighbors. I found it satisfying to tell my servants. Do you tell your servants? In some cases, we have the same servants. Mine are on the federal level, Tammy Baldwin, Ron Johnson and Tom Tiffany and my state servants are Romaine Quinn and Chanz Green. We elect them to serve us. Whether we voted for them or not, they still are our servants, they're not special, they just do a job. What a great time to contact them. We can complain to each other, but that really doesn't change anything. An example would be healthcare. Whether you're a worker, business owner, or retired, it touches all of us. Healthcare is both a state and federal issue, so it would take about 5 minutes per servant to let them know how it is making your life more difficult.

If you make the choice to contact your rep-

resentatives do not use profanity or call elected officials' names. That will get you on a list and you will not be taken seriously. It is best to write down your thoughts so when you decide to contact them you can be sure to get your point across and stay on track. If We the People do not inform our representatives, how are they to know how their constituents feel about the direction of the country/state? We should take part as a civic duty, it's empowering. The next time someone starts complaining about our country or state you can then ask, why are you telling me? Have you called your representatives? If you have, well then, you're a patriot!

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.



DID YOU KNOW?

CALORIE INTAKE

Age, gender and activity levels affect how much calories the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services advises aging individuals to consume each day. According to DHHS guidelines, sedentary men ages 61 and older should consume roughly 2,000 calories per day. Moderately active men between the ages of 61 and 65 are advised to consume 2,400 calories per day, while men at that activity level age 66 and older are urged to consume roughly 2,200 calories per day. DHHS recommendations indicate active men between the ages of 61 and 75 should consume 2,600 calories per day, while those 76 and up should reduce that consumption to 2,400 calories per day. Women's recommended calorie intake is significantly lower, as DHHS guidelines advise sedentary women age 61 and older to consume 1,600 calories per day.



FILE PHOTO

Women 61 and older who engage in moderate physical activity each day are urged to consume 1,800 calories per day, a recommendation that increases to 2,000 calories per day for those in the same age group who live a physically active lifestyle. It's important to note that these recommendations are just guidelines, and seniors should consult a physician familiar with their medical history for more personal recommendations regarding calorie consumption.

READ REGULARLY

Millions of people will be diagnosed with various dementias, and individuals may wonder if there is anything they can do to prevent or delay cognitive decline. A study published in July 2021 in the journal *Neurology* found people who read regularly had a lower risk of developing dementia compared to those who did not. Reading improves memory, attention, process-

ing speed, and other factors in older adults by stimulating the brain through the activation of multiple cognitive processes. Reading promotes the creation of new neural connections and strengthens existing ones, helping to maintain brain health, according to a 2023 study published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA)*.

SENIOR EXERCISE

The significance of exercise is well documented, and that even goes for seniors. But in the case of exercise, can there be too much of a good thing? Should seniors be exercising every day? Seniors can exercise most days, but daily, intense workouts are not necessary. Cedars-Sinai says adults 65 and older should aim for between 2.5 to 5 hours of moderate exercise each week, which aligns with recommendations from the Department of Health and Human Services. Seniors crunched for time can engage in between 1.25 and 2.5 hours of intense aerobic exercise each week. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends 150 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise per week. That can translate into 30 minutes of daily exercise for five days, or it can be broken up into other intervals as necessary. Strength and balance training also should be a consideration. Seniors should keep in mind that overdoing intensity or length of workouts may contribute to injury, which can derail efforts to get fit.

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



Wisconsin SMP
January 2026 SCAM SPOTLIGHT

Not Every Ring Is a Friend!

Think back to a time when the telephone was a family's main connection to the outside world. Back then, having a phone meant staying connected to family and having help in an emergency.

Today, that has changed. It is estimated that about 95 percent of the calls are unwanted — sales pitches, donation requests, or scams. What was once a lifeline has become a tool for marketers and criminals. Scammers often target seniors because they want access to personal information, money, or Medicare benefits.

So what can you do? First, let your answering machine or voice-mail screen your calls. ONLY answer when you recognize the caller. It also helps to plan ahead and prepare a simple response.

HERE ARE A FEW SUGGESTIONS:

- If the caller claims to represent a charity, ask them to send information in writing and state that you do not donate over the phone.
- If someone is selling something, request written information. If they say it's a limited-time offer, explain that you don't make decisions during phone calls.
- Ask for the caller's name, company name, and a callback number, and tell them you will verify the offer before responding.

MOST IMPORTANTLY, WATCH FOR THESE RED FLAGS:

- Requests for credit card or bank information



- Requests for personal information such as Medicare or Social Security numbers
- Pressure to act immediately

immediately

- Calls where the caller claims to know information about you but asks you to confirm it

If you hear any of these warning signs, hang up immediately.

Report any suspected fraud or suspicious activity to the Wisconsin Senior Medicare Patrol. Call 888-818-2611 to report fraudulent activity.

For more information, visit www.smpwi.org.

This project was supported, in part, by grant number 90MPPG0102, from the U. S. Administration for Community Living, Department of Health and Human Services, Washington, D.C. 20201

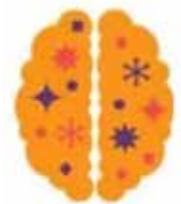


Wits Workout:
Brain health with a bit of fun

What do **social connection** and **intellectually challenging activities** have in common?



Brain health of course!



Join us for Wits Workouts:
A social gathering with brain games and activities.
All ages welcome

Each month offers a new and exciting theme:
join us as you are able!

2026:		
Spooner Wellness Center		
3rd Tuesday of the month		
10:30 am		
Jan. 20	May 19	Sept. 15
Feb. 17	June 16	Oct. 21
March 17	July 14	Nov 17
April 15	August 18	Dec 15

Please call **Patrice Garcia** to register at least one week in advance.
715.635.4477







ST. CROIX CASINOS

TURTLE LAKE • DANBURY • HERTEL

THREE UNIQUE CASINOS ♠

From Turtle Lake to the Vegas-style table games of Danbury to the slots-and-more-slots style of Hertel, St. Croix Casinos has something for everyone.

GOPLAYWIN.COM | 800.846.8946

Seniors, We Appreciate Your Business!



A local guide to services, health & housing for our community's seniors

Fresh EVERY DAY!
DELI • BAKERY • RESTAURANT
7 Days A Week

BREAKFAST Served 7 am - 11:30 am
Free Cup of Coffee with Refill with Purchase of Breakfast Special!
 LUNCH SPECIALS Served 10:30 am - 2 pm
 DINNER SPECIALS Served 4 pm - 6 pm
DELI HOURS: 7 AM - 7 PM
DELI RESTAURANT HOURS:
 Mon. - Sat. 7 am - 7 pm • Sun. 7 am - 6 pm

Check Out Our **MADE TO ORDER MENU**
 Deli Direct: 715-635-7700

SCHMITZ'S

 Since 1937

SHOP SMART • SHOP ECONOMART
economart
OPEN 24 HOURS
 700 S. River St., Spooner, WI • 715-635-2836

Rated 5 Star
by Family Caregivers

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Since 1992
 A Special Kind of Care

For more information please call
715-635-9077
www.regionalhospice.org

Glenview Assisted Living
 A LOCAL, PRIVATE, NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION
 201 Glenview Lane, Shell Lake, WI 54871

• Private apartments and/or units, all with bathrooms
 • 24 Hour Staff
 • RN Medication Management
 • Outstanding Environment, to include meals, activities, housekeeping, laundry, and on-site beauty shop
 • Choice with Dignity

Call now for your personal tour • 715-468-4255
 Or for more information, log onto our website:
www.th-glenview.org

Affordable - Senior Citizen Housing
 ~ Now Taking Applications ~

• Rent is 30% of monthly adjusted income
 • Air Conditioning
 • Utilities Included
 • Community Room
 • Appliances
 • Indoor Mail Delivery
 • Laundry Facilities

MINONG ~ ACORN APARTMENTS
A Great Place to Call Home

CCB Housing Management - Mark Adamak
 1310 N. Wisconsin Ave., Rice Lake, WI 54869
1-888-636-2366 • ccbhousing.org

Your **FULL SERVICE** Pharmacy Department

Angela, Pharmacist

Available at the **PHARMACY**

- FREE BLOOD PRESSURE SCREENINGS
- VACCINES
- LIQUID RX FLAVORING
- DRIVE-UP

SCHMITZ'S

economart
 700 S. River St., Spooner, WI

Pharmacy Direct: 715.635.8785
 M-F 9:30 am - 6:00 pm

St. Croix HEALTH

saintcroixhealth.org
800.828.3627

Frederic • Lindstrom • St. Croix Falls
 Unity • Webster

IMC INDIANHEAD MEDICAL CENTER

We Accept Medicare and Advantage Plans

Primary Care Clinic
 24/7 Emergency Room Care
 Critical Access Hospital
 Rehabilitation
 Surgical Services

24/7
 Emergency Room Care

113 4th Ave., Shell Lake, WI 54871
 715-468-2711
www.IndianheadMedicalCenter.com

RED CROSS PHARMACY

Caring for you and about you.

"YOUR PRESCRIPTION SPECIALISTS"

HealthMart PHARMACY

Open 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday - Friday
 Saturday 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. • Closed Sundays
 Holidays 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

DOWNTOWN SPOONER • 715-635-2117

SPOONER FUNERAL HOME
 BRATLEY-NELSON FUNERAL HOMES & CREMATORY

715-635-8919
 306 RUSK STREET
 SPOONER

www.bratley-nelsonchapels.com

Shell Lake Pharmacy

Your Full Service Pharmacy

HealthMart PHARMACY

Located In **IMC**
 113 4th Ave., Shell Lake
715-468-7800
 Monday - Friday 8:30-5