



Crawford County *Senior Gazette* January 2025



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New Year, New Perspectives: Wisdom and Resolutions for Older Adults, from Older Adults

By Toby Neal



As 2024 ends, and 2025 draws near, it offers an opportunity for reflection, renewal, and growth at any age. For older adults, this season of transition can be especially meaningful—a time to draw from a lifetime of experience and embrace the present with purpose and hope. Let's explore how seniors can make resolutions that honor their past while enriching their days ahead.

The older we get the more one essential truth becomes apparent: the regrets people often express at the end

of life are not about the jobs they didn't take or the possessions they didn't acquire. Instead, they regret not nurturing relationships, not expressing their authentic selves, and not prioritizing what truly matters to them. These insights provide a profound framework for setting meaningful goals, no matter your age.

As we reflect on these lessons, we can focus on what is most important: health, connection, and fulfillment. The New Year is an ideal time to realign with these priorities and embark on a journey of purposeful living. Need help with some practical, inspiring resolutions you can adopt to make the most of the coming year? Try these on for size!

Resolve to MOVE!

Our bodies are remarkable, capable of adapting and improving at any stage of life. Commit to nurturing your physical health this year by embracing small, consistent changes. Even a short daily walk can strengthen your heart, improve your mood, and boost your energy. If mobility is a concern, consider chair exercises or simple stretches to maintain flexibility. Programs like tai chi or yoga, designed for seniors, can enhance balance and reduce the risk of falls.

Continued on Page 5

Our Mission...

The Mission of the Commission on Aging is to advocate and promote the well-being and independence of all older adults of Crawford County.

Find us by searching for
Crawford County Commission on Aging & Senior Center

HOURS OF OPERATION

**Monday - Friday
8:30am to 4:30 pm**

**4388 West M-72 Hwy
Grayling, MI 49738**

**Phone (989) 348-7123
Fax (989) 348-8342
www.crawfordcoa.org**

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Commission on Aging & Senior Center
Smartphone Scan to our Website



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The Senior Gazette

4388 West M-72 Hwy, Grayling, MI 49738

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For advertising or addition to the mailing list, contact us at (989) 348-7123 or seniorcentermgr@crawfordcoa.org

Commission on Aging

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Shannon Sorenson, Vice-Chair
Sandy Woods, Secretary
Laurie Jamison, Commissioner
Mark Ostahowski, Member
Jason Thompson, Member
Cheryl Wolkens, Member

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Carlie Wilson, Senior Center Manager
Lynn Cheney, Office Manager
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Kate Moshier, Nutrition Manager
Cooks: Megan Hagle, Dalton Keir

Sarah Pollock, In-Home Services Manager
Jan Williamson, RN
Kathy Meisner, Program Assistant

Homemakers:

Kathy, Jill, Susan & Danette

January Birthdays

**Lenora Beckett 1/22
Cassie Campbell 1/14
Larry Davis 1/21
Donna Farren 1/9
Lisa Munfo 1/25**

**Senior Center Birthday Lunch
Tuesday, January 28th,
11:30 a- 12:30p**

Permission forms are at the Senior Center so we can share your birthday in this Gazette. Please fill one out!

Happy Birthday!

Car Donation Program

Keeping that old car running can be expensive. Donating your car to Senior Neighbors is easy, the pick-up is free, and your gift is tax deductible. Senior Neighbors accepts cars, trucks, RVs, vans, motorcycles, boats, and much more! Visit the COA's link to donate your old vehicle today: <https://careasy.org/crawford-county-commission-on-aging> or call 844-411-5768 for more information on the car donation program.

Daylight Diamonds On Hold Until Spring

Daylight Diamonds will be taking a break from January until March of 2025. Regular Diamond Dancers will continue on Monday evenings at Tinker's Junction. For more information on dates, visit Grayling Diamond Dancers on Facebook.

TwoRiverDeli

Slicing Meat's & Cheese's to Order

Fresh & Frozen Pasties

989-344-5554 tworiverdeli.com

Check out our new location @ 600 N James St. Grayling



Support Groups:

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

St. Francis Episcopal Church, Grayling
Sun. (O/ST) / Tue. (C/D) / Fri. (C/B)
@ 7:00 pm
Mon. / Fri. (C/D) @NOON
Wed. (W/C/D) (Women's) @ 7:00 pm
St. John Lutheran Church, Grayling
Sat. (B/C) @ NOON / Thurs. (C/D)@7:00 pm
Frederic Twp. Hall
SAT. @ 6:00 pm (C/H)

ALZHEIMER'S SUPPORT GROUP

3rd Wednesday, 11 am
The Brook of Grayling, 503 Rose St.
Info call: COA Senior Center (989) 348-7123

CHOICES GROUP

Anger Management for Women
Mondays, 1:00-2:30 pm
At River House Inc. in Grayling
Register: (989)348-3169 Lynn or Danyelle

GLUED

Tuesdays, 4:00-5:30pm, for 1st-6th graders
at River House Inc. in Grayling
who have experienced domestic violence (directly / indirectly) sexual abuse or bullying.
River House info: (989) 348-3169

GRAYLING AL-ANON

Tuesdays 11am
St. Francis Episcopal Church, Grayling
Call: (989)348-5850

HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS GROUP

Thursdays, 2:00-3:30pm
At River House Inc. in Grayling
Register: (989)348-3169 Barbara

LONG COVID - SUPPORT GROUP

First Thursday each month, 5-6:30pm
via Zoom, call (231) 935-0951 to register

NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS

Wednesdays, 8pm
Saturdays, 4pm
St. Francis Episcopal Church, Grayling

WEIGHT LOSS & SUPPORT GROUP

Thursdays 10:30am – 11:30am
St. John Lutheran Church, Grayling
Info: (989)348-1398 Mary Kay

FAITH BASED GRIEF GROUP

Wednesday, 6-8pm—(Aug 2 to Oct 25 Class)
Grayling Baptist Church, 705 Madsen St.
(989) 390-0831 www.griefshare.org/about
www.griefshare.org/groups/169551



General Giving

Although the Crawford County Commission on Aging is supported by state & federal grants, Crawford County millage monies and Crawford United we could not do what we do without also having the support of people just like you. You can donate online at crawfordcoa.org/make-a-donation, in person, or by mailing your donation to us at 4388 M-72 HWY, Grayling, Mi, 49738.

***Make Your Mark:
Leave a Legacy***

By including the Crawford County Commission on Aging (COA) in your estate plans, you can help ensure that our mission of advocating and promoting the well-being and independence of older adults endures long after you're gone. Here are a few ways you can gain tax or estate benefits while also supporting the COA. If you're not sure where to start, we encourage you to consult with an attorney or financial advisor to determine the best option for you.

Bequest

You can designate a specific amount or percentage of assets that you would like to leave to COA as part of your will or trust and your gift will be exempt from federal estate taxes.

Retirement Plan Beneficiary

You can name the COA as a beneficiary of an IRS, 401(k) or 403(b). A change of beneficiary form is required from your plan administrator.

Life Insurance Beneficiary

You can assign a charitable organization as the beneficiary of your life insurance policy which can provide tax benefits while helping to sustain arts and culture.

Charitable Trusts

Charitable Remainder and Charitable Lead Trusts allow you to designate and split your assets in the way that best fits your wishes.

By making a legacy gift, you're supporting the Commission on Aging's work to ensure that every older adult is taken care of in our community. Your generosity will ensure everyone receives a meal, in-home services and the advocacy needed to support the needs of older adults in our community.

Thank you for the consideration.

Sponsors

Silver Sneakers led by Rich Ferrigan of **Grayling Fitness Center**
Foot Clinic Offered by **Linda Russel**
Hearing Clinic Offered by **Advantage Audiology**
Birthday Lunch Flowers donated by **Family Fare**
Legal Aid Offered by **Jason R. Thompson Law Office PLC**
Medicine Shoppe Bingo by **The Medicine Shoppe Pharmacy**
Fit for the Aging by **Sami Szydzik of Stronger Fitness**
Housing Counseling by Laurie Jamison

★★
★ **Volunteers and donations received** ★
★ **After the 11th day of the month, will be** ★
★ **noted in the next Senior Gazette.** ★
★★

General Donations from:

Michele Arnholt Grayling Promotional Association	Linda Bostic Michael and Patty Clark St Mary's Women's Club Jane Croze Gray Fairbanks Family Fare Richard & Alice Foley Jeanie Harwood Cornell Insurance Cindy Johnson Gerald Larson	Dora Mead Paul and Judy Mesack Jeff and Amy Pendergraff Tad and Bonnie Randolph Laura Jean Siggins Sally Slicker Maze Stephan Brad & Barb Summers Kevin Wiley Sandra Woods Ron and Margaret Yon
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Memorials

Monetary gifts to the Crawford County Commission on Aging are a fitting tribute to the memory of those no longer with us or in honor of those we love. Your tax deductible gift in their name will enable us to continue to provide and initiate programs which promote the well-being and independence of all older adults of Crawford County. You can also buy a memorial plaque to be displayed in our Dining Room. If you are interested in making a donation in memorial of someone, call 989-348-7123 for more information.

Memorial Donations

Farrell Thomas in memory of Linda (Brooks) Thomas; Abigail Scheller, Sandra Joae, Peter Kocefus, Carolyn Swift, Judith Marchlewicz, Fred and Karen Cook each donated in memory of Arlene Mae Czuba; Scott Foster and Dorothy Peacor also each donated in memory of Tina Foster.

Giving Tuesday

Donors for Giving Tuesday are on page 6 of the Senior Gazette.

Hometown Heroes
\$300 per day or supports a day of Meals on Wheels
Running Talley of Support: \$14,135, Thank you!
45 meal days have been purchased to date. Honor a loved one, adopt a special day, do it as a family, birthday, anniversary, co-workers, sports team, etc. Thank you Tom Jarosz for sponsoring January 13th, 15th, 17th, 20th, and 22nd, in honor of the COA Staff. Help us keep providing exceptional care and meals for our local elderly. Donate today!
Be our Hometown Heroes.

Make a Donation Today & Create Golden Opportunities for a Lifetime!

Name _____
Mailing Address _____
City _____ State _____ ZIP _____
Home Phone (_____) _____ Cell Phone (_____) _____
E-Mail Address _____
Method of Payment Cash Check **Amount Enclosed \$** _____

Please make check payable to "COA" at 4388 West M-72 Hwy, Grayling, MI 49738
Call (989) 348-7123 to make donations or payments of \$25 or more with a credit, debit, or EBT card.
All Gifts are Tax Deductible

- I would like to receive monthly emails about activities and events.
- I would like to be contacted about Legacy Giving.
- I would like to volunteer for the Commission on Aging.

Thank you to our COA Volunteers

Meredith Anderson	Tim Miller
Bob Becks	Wayne & Rosemary Nelson
Betty Jo Bresmon	Nelson
Donna Brown	Suzanne Ostahowski
Ben & Pam Carr	Mark Ostahowski
Debbie Carrigan	Ron Pagereski
Caroline Diponio	Lois & David Platt
Richard Ferrigan	Chuck & Robin Rodgers
Janet Gilbert	Rodgers
Sherry Haag	Jon & Gail Schultz
Sharron Hagerman	Jon Shazri
Donn Handy	Sally Slicker
Val Hendricks	Richard Smith
Susan Hensler	Janis Smith
Cheryl Hopp	Maze Stephan
Donna Hubbard	Ann Stephenson
Leidewey Hunter	Brad Summers
Cindy Johnson	Ellen Thompson
Ron Kemerer	Ken Thurston
Glenn & Lorelei King	Diane Tomlinson
Linda LaBrie	Martha Trenkner
Eileen Langhome	Carol Wilder
Alice Lee	Curtis Williams
Nancy Lemmens	Jan Williamson
Cathy Lester	Ernie Windolph
David Markle	Laura Wood
Sandy Marshall	Sandy Woods
Dan & Karen McCarthy	<u>THANK</u> <u>YOU</u>

We Won't Drop the Ball on these New Activities



Bingocize Begins January 6th & January 7th, 2:30 pm

Looking to stay active and have some fun? Try Bingocize, where bingo meets gentle exercise. This class will be held weekly on Mondays and Tuesdays, and is an engaging program that combines the excitement of bingo with easy exercises designed to improve mobility, strength, and balance. For more information, please call 989-348-7123.

Walking Group at Kirtland Starts January 10th, 10:00 am

Lace up your sneakers and hit the track—walks at Kirtland's indoor track are now completely FREE! Plus, join us for our fun and friendly Friday Group Walks starting on January 10th. It's the perfect way to stay active, connect with others, and enjoy a healthy start to the weekend. Walk and meet other walk enthusiasts, get exercise, and start your Friday mornings off in style.

Weekly Bible Study Starts January 10th, 10:30 am

Bible Study with Pastor John from Heritage Baptist Church will begin on Friday, January 10th at 10:30 am. The class will continue each Friday for 52 weeks. The group will be attending lunch following the class.

Billy McAllister Concert **DATE TO BE ANNOUNCED**

Tickets for in county residents are \$15.00 per person, and are \$20.00 for those who are out of county. Join the COA in welcoming Billy McAllister for a Sinatra tribute show. Get ready for a night of unforgettable tunes and timeless charm as we pay tribute to the one and only Frank Sinatra. You'll be *Flyin' to the Moon* with every classic hit. Don't *Strangers in the Night* us—mark your calendar and join us for an evening that's sure to be *Unforgettable*.

COA Board Meeting January 21st, 4:30 pm

Be part of the conversation as the COA's board meets to discuss plans for the future.

This is your chance to share ideas, ask questions, and see firsthand how decisions are made. Don't miss this opportunity to help shape our center's future—your input makes a difference.

DHD#10 Radon Presentation January 14th, 1:00 pm

Attend this presentation to learn about the risks of Radon exposure. Radon awareness matters because radon is a colorless, odorless, radioactive gas that can pose significant health risks when present at elevated levels in homes or buildings. Call 989-348-7123 to reserve your seat.

Cooking Matters with Michigan State Extension Office (MSU-E) Starts January 16th, 1:00 pm—3:00 pm

Learn to make healthy, delicious meals on a budget. Cooking Matters is a free, hands-on class where you'll get practical tips on meal planning, shopping smart, and preparing nutritious meals. Each session includes fun cooking activities and tasty samples. Registration for this class will close on January 6th at 4:30 pm. The event will run on Thursdays from January 16th until February 27th.

January Jeopardy January 28th, 1:00 pm—2:00 pm

Categories for this month will include "Winter Wonderland" with facts about snow, ice, and winter sports. "January in History," which include questions about historical events that happened in January. "Capricorn and Aquarius" which are questions about the zodiac signs, as well as famous Capricorn/Aquarius celebrities. "Bundle Up" which will feature trivia about winter clothing and accessories. "MLK and Civil Rights" with questions honoring Martin Luther King Jr. and his impact on history. "The Calendar Says..." with facts about months, days, and the Gregorian calendar. If these topics, and more like them, join the jeopardy group on January 28th.

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**Ralph Oppermann, D.D.S.
Jennifer Malicowski, D.D.S.**

800 E. Michigan Ave., Grayling, MI
(989) 344-2525 Fax (989) 348-9629

Continued: New Year, New Perspective

The Commission on Aging and Senior Center is offering opportunities for this, such as *Bingocize* (“where bingo meets gentle exercise”) or *Winter Walking at Kirtland* (find out more about these in this issue of the Senior Gazette). Exercising with peers adds an element of fun and accountability. It’s a great way to stay active and make new friends.



Resolve to CONNECT!

Loneliness can become a significant challenge in later years, but the New Year is the perfect opportunity to nurture existing relationships and build new ones.

A great place to do that is at our new Senior Center! We are a hub of activity, offering everything from arts and crafts to game nights and travel opportunities. Engaging in these activities fosters a sense of community and belonging. How about joining us there? Or, what about volunteering? Whether it’s mentoring youth, assisting at local charities, or helping with community events, your time and effort can make a meaningful difference while keeping you socially connected. Another resolution you might explore is the rekindling of old relationships. Take the time to reach out to old friends or distant relatives. A simple phone call or handwritten letter can bridge gaps and reignite bonds.

Resolve to LEARN!

Learning keeps the mind sharp, and the spirit engaged. Explore activities that challenge you mentally and emotionally. You can do this by taking up a new hobby, joining a book club, or enrolling in a class this year! Whether it’s painting, gardening, or playing an instrument, engaging in creative pursuits brings joy and satisfaction. Reading and discussing books with others can open new perspectives and spark delightful conversations. Many colleges

and universities offer free or reduced tuition for seniors. This could be done here locally at Kirtland, or online through other schools. Consider studying a subject you’ve always been curious about.

Resolve to be GRATEFUL!

The rearview of aging reminds us to cherish each moment and focus on the blessings in our lives. Practicing gratitude can transform your outlook and increase your sense of happiness. You could do this in two easy ways. The first would be to start a *Gratitude Journal*: Each day, jot down a few things you’re thankful for. Over time, you’ll build a collection of positive memories and reflections. What a fun gift this might make to pass on to your kids or grandkids! The other would be to *meditate or practice mindfulness*: Even a few minutes of mindful breathing each day can reduce stress and increase emotional well-being.



Resolve to HEAL!

Your emotional health is just as important as your physical health. Set intentions to nurture your mental and emotional well-being. One of the great things about getting older is the confidence of knowing we can do the hard things, even growing and learning how to heal emotionally and spiritually. For some that might mean seeking *counseling or support*: If you’re facing unresolved grief or challenges, consider speaking with a therapist or joining a support group. For others that might be through *expressing your feelings*: Be open about your thoughts and emotions with trusted loved ones. Authentic communication strengthens bonds and fosters understanding. Or maybe try *engaging in spiritual practices*: If spirituality is important to you, reconnect with practices that bring you peace and clarity, whether it’s prayer, meditation, or attending services.

Resolve to PRIORITIZE!

The New Year invites us to step back and evaluate our lives. Ask yourself what truly matters and let go of what no longer serves you. One way of doing this is to *declutter and simplify*: Letting go of physical and emotional clutter can be liberating. Donate unused items and focus on what brings you joy. Or you might try focusing on *quality over quantity*: Spend your time and energy on activities and relationships that align with your values and bring you happiness.

Each year is a gift, filled with opportunities to grow, connect, and thrive. Older adults bring a unique perspective to the table—a wealth of wisdom, resilience, and stories worth sharing. By setting meaningful resolutions and embracing the lessons of the past, you can make this year your most fulfilling yet. It’s never too late to align your life with your deepest values. Embrace this New Year with open arms and an open heart. The best chapters may still lie ahead. Here’s to 2025!

 Like us on Facebook

After you “Like” us, our events, program posts, and many more pictures will link on your page. Facebook will set you as a “Follower” of our page. You’ll get fast updates on us and stay connected to our latest announcements. When your friends & family visit your Facebook page, they will see our posts on your page feed.

facebook.com/CrawfordCOA/
Like, Love or Share
Please help us grow our Facebook!

  Scan here to be Taken to our Facebook

Retraction Notice

In the December issue of the Senior Gazette, an error was made in the Hometown Heroes section. Mark Hansen and Nancy Lemmen donated December 9th in honor of David M. Lemmen. We apologize for this mistake, and would like to formally thank both Nancy Lemmen and Mark Hansen for their kind donation.

Thank You Cornell Insurance Employees



Paul Hartman from Cornell Insurance Agency of Grayling is pictured with Sarah Pollock, the In-Home Services Manager with their generous donation of Christmas gifts for local older adults. For the last several years,

employees of Cornell Insurance Agency have collected funds by paying to wear jeans on Fridays. We wish to thank them for their continued support at the holidays.

Thanks to companies like Cornell Insurance Agency, and the support of many individuals in the community, the Commission on Aging was able to support over 50 older adults in Grayling this Christmas. Thank you to all who donated!

An Open Letter to Future Volunteers

Right now, our Meals on Wheels program faces a serious shortage of volunteer drivers, and it's starting to have a significant impact. As a community organization, we rely heavily on volunteers to bring meals and connection to our older adult neighbors who depend on these services. But with volunteer numbers dwindling, staff members have stepped up to help with deliveries. Though we're proud to fill the gaps, this isn't sustainable – and it diverts staff from the vital work they need to do to keep other programs running smoothly.

Volunteer drivers are the heart of this program, delivering not only meals but also vital human connection for our older adult neighbors. Without enough volunteers, some older adults face fewer visits and greater isolation. If you've ever thought about giving back or want to make a difference in someone's life, volunteering with Meals on Wheels is an easy, rewarding way to do just that. Even just a few hours a week makes a meaningful impact. Our volunteer drivers are welcomed with open arms, receive all the training they need, and join a community of people who genuinely care.

No experience is needed, just a reliable vehicle and a willingness to make a difference. Flexible scheduling is available, and we can work with whatever time you can give – whether it's once a week, once a month, or anything in between. Not to mention, the COA offers mileage reimbursement.

We're incredibly grateful to anyone who can offer a few hours of their time to help our Meals on Wheels program continue to thrive. Each volunteer driver helps us continue to meet the needs of our community, one meal and one visit at a time.

If you're interested in volunteering or know someone who might be, please call Sarah Pollock at 989-348-7123, or visit our website: <https://www.crawfordcoa.org/volunteer/volunteer-application>.

January Suggestion Box

Q: We need welcome pack of Grayling information, flyers to give to new people coming into the COA. Gift welcome packet.

A: This is a great idea, but unfortunately not within our budget. When newcomers arrive, we give them a tour and a gazette. If there is a volunteer who would like to work on creating a gift pack for newcomers, we'd love to chat with you.

Q: Adopt an Adult – Love It! Please consider starting earlier than 12/1.

A: Thanks for the feedback. This is our first year, so next year we'll try getting it together for November.

Please continue submitting feedback into our suggestion box, we love to hear from you!

Medical Equipment Spotlight

By Kathy Meisner

The toilet safety frame provides stabilizing support for users to sit or stand up from the toilet. It is designed for people with mobility difficulties. The toilet rails provides stabilizing support to prevent accidental slips or falls that are common in bathrooms.



This is a resource we commonly have available. If you are in need of a toilet safety rail the Commission on Aging has one available along with other medical equipment for adults 60 and over who live in Crawford County. All equipment is on a first come, first served basis. Please give Kathy a call at (989) 348-7123 to see if we have what you need.

Giving Tuesday Recap

This past Giving Tuesday, our community came together in an incredible way, raising a total of \$5,745.00 to support the Meals on Wheels program at the Commission on Aging. This generosity has a direct and lasting impact on the older adults we serve, ensuring they have access to food and social interaction, while maintaining their independence.

We are truly inspired by the kindness and commitment of our donors. Every dollar you contributed helps us continue our mission. We cannot thank each of the people who donated to us enough.

Thank you for making a difference and for showing the power of giving.

Thank You

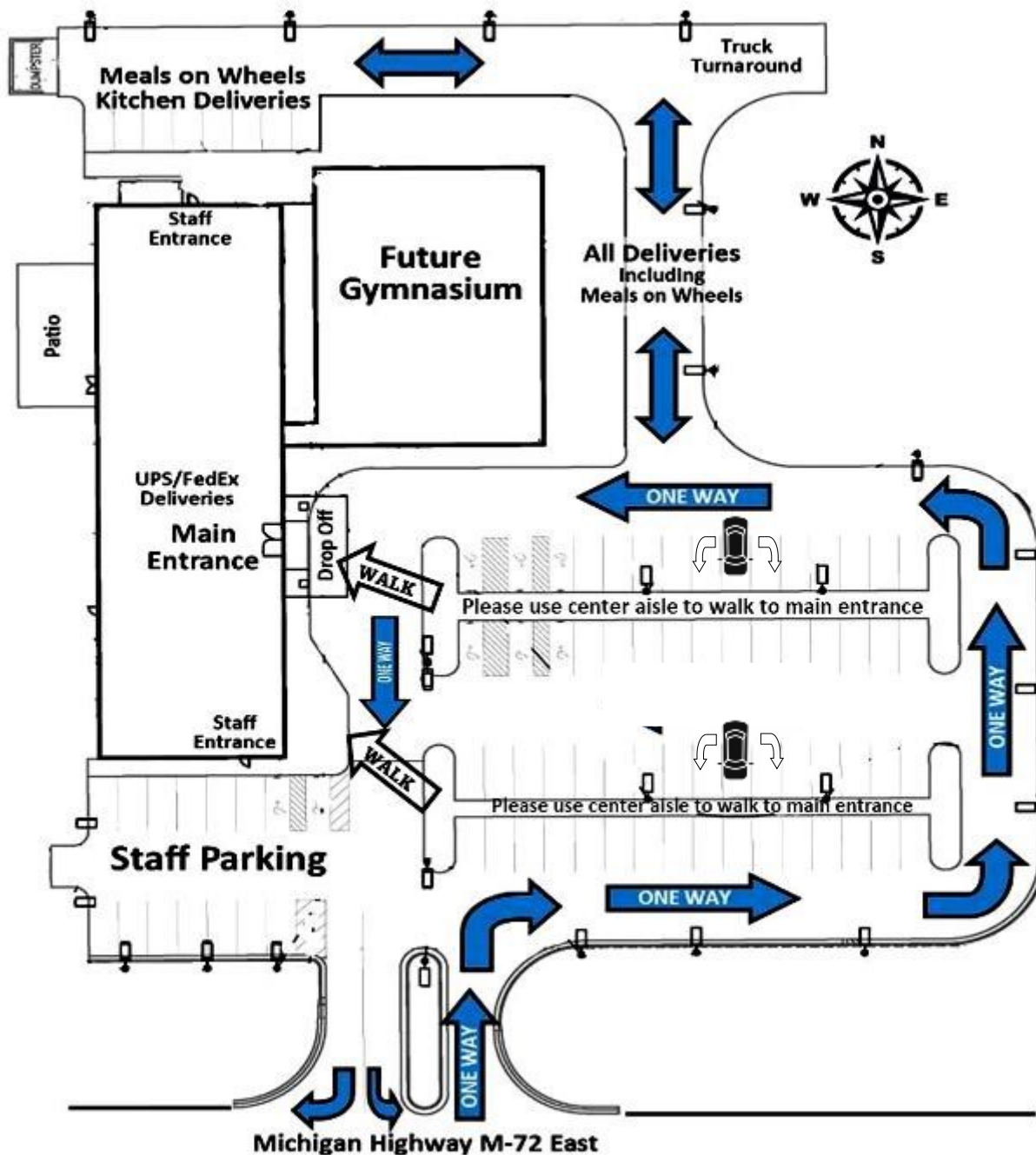
Anonymous
Claudia Albright
Paul Bailey
Patricia Bonamie
Charlotte Bloomquist
Betty Jo Bresmon
F. Carr
Brian Chace
Elizabeth M. Chace
Charles Curro
Jane Croze
Margaret
Dorenkaamp
Susan Hensler

Valerie Hendricks
Janet Gugin
Gerald Larson
Paul Lerg
Kirsten Lietz
Duane and Betty
Liebler
Joan M. Lukes
Dennis & Mickie
Meyers
Tim & Olie Miller
Sandy Moore
Wayne and
Rosemary Nelson

Jeff and Amy
Pendergraff
Jack & Phyllis
Richards
Cliff and Linda
Schultz
Valerie Sloan
Judy Stark
Dave and Ann
Stephenson
Marjorie J. Warner
Sandra Woods
Bruce and Jan
Zalobsky

Winter Safety at the Commission on Aging and Senior Center

Parking and Deliveries



As temperatures drop and snow begins to fall, slippery parking lots become a common hazard. To help reduce the risk of falls during these cold months, follow these simple safety guidelines when exiting your vehicle.

Exit from the Front of Your Vehicle

Whenever possible, exit at the front of your vehicle rather than the rear. Walking to the middle of the parking aisle is the safest route. This area is a high priority for snow and ice removal, providing a more secure walking surface.

Avoid Exiting at the Rear of Your Vehicle

Exiting at the rear of your vehicle can be risky. The area behind your car may not have been adequately cleared of snow or ice, increasing the chance of slipping or falling. By staying in the cleared areas and exiting carefully, you can enjoy a safer winter season. Always take your time, wear appropriate footwear, and remain vigilant for icy patches. Stay safe out there!

Walk like a Penguin when it is Icy

Walking like a penguin is a practical and effective way to stay balanced on slippery surfaces. The technique works because it shifts your center of gravity directly over your supporting foot, reducing the risk of slipping. Remember these four steps for staying safe on icy surfaces: take your hands out of your pockets and avoid carrying anything too heavy; lean slightly forward to reduce strain on your lower body; take short, flat-footed steps to lower the chance of losing traction; and do not lead with your heel.

Use this map and these tips to stay safe all winter long during your visits to the COA.

Heat Assistance through the Winter Protection Plan







The Winter Protection Plan (WPP) protects both senior and low-income customers from disconnection and high energy bill payments during the winter months (Nov. 1 through March 31). You qualify for the plan if you meet one of the following requirements: Are age 65 or older; Receive Department of Health and Human Services cash or food assistance, or Medicaid; Have a household income at or below 150 percent of federal poverty level guidelines (see below) Eligible seniors participating in WPP are not required to make

specific payments during the heating season. Eligible low-income customers who participate in WPP need to make monthly payments equal to 7 percent of their estimated annual bill, November through March, to avoid service disconnection during that time. At the end of the protection period, both low-income and seniors must pay off any money owed in installments between April and November. For more information or to apply, call Michigan Gas Utilities at 800-401-6402. For Crawford County Residents 60+ needing

assistance with these applications, call Tammy Findlay at 989-348-7123 for assistance.

Sorenson Lockwood
FUNERAL HOME INC.
Pre-Planned Funerals Cremation Services
Markers Monuments
 Terrie L. Lockwood, Manager/Owner
 Phone: (989)348-2951 Fax: (989)348-4968
 1108 North Down River Rd, Grayling MI 49738
 Web: sorensonlockwood.com
 E-mail: sorensonlockwood@gmail.com

January 2025 - Meal Calendar

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
	31 CENTER CLOSED 	1 CENTER CLOSED 	2 11:30a-12:30p Lunch Balsamic chicken Tomato Parmesan Pasta Italian Blend Fresh Orange 2% Milk	3 11:30a-12:30p Lunch Pepper Steak, Brown Rice, Stir Fry Vegetable, Sugar Snap Peas, Kiwi, 2% Milk
6 11:30a-12:30p Lunch Chicken Tenders, Cheesy Mashed Potatoes, Broccoli and Cauliflower, Fresh Orange, 2% Milk	7 11:30a-12:30p Lunch Beef and Broccoli, Brown Rice, Stir Fry Vegetable, Four Berries Blend, 2% Milk	8 11:30a-12:30p Lunch Pork Roast, Baked Potato, Green Beans, Pear, 2% Milk	9 11:30a-12:30p Lunch Lasagna, Mixed Vegetables, Grapes Special Dinner 4:00p-6:00p Orange Chicken with Pea Pods, Chinese Pepper Steak, Fried Rice, Vegetable Lo Mein, Egg Rolls, Bananas in Strawberry Glaze, a Chocolate Sheet Cake, and Fortune Cookies	10 11:30a-12:30p Lunch Roast Turkey Mashed Potatoes W/ Gravy Peas and Onions Fresh Orange 2% Milk
13 11:30a-12:30p Lunch Chicken Cordon Bleu, Mashed Potatoes W/ Gravy, Green Beans, Pineapple Chunks, 2% Milk <i>Sponsored by Tom Jarosz</i> 	14 11:30a-12:30p Lunch Chicken Fajita, Roasted Corn & Black Bean Fiesta, Grapes, 2% Milk	15 11:30a-12:30p Lunch Hamburger Stroganoff, Green Beans, Apricots, 2% Milk <i>Sponsored by Tom Jarosz</i> 	16 11:30a-12:30p Lunch Macaroni & Cheese with Ham, Harvest Blend Vegetables, Grapes, 2% Milk	17 11:30a-12:30p Lunch Cheese Ravioli w/Sauce, Asparagus, Italian Blend, Grapes, 2% Milk <i>Sponsored by Tom Jarosz</i> 
20 11:30a-12:30p Lunch Breaded Fish Fillet, Cheesy Mashed Potatoes, Crinkle Cut Carrots, Pineapple <i>Sponsored by Tom Jarosz</i> 	21 Birthday Lunch 11:30a-12:30p Lunch Meatloaf, Mashed Potatoes w/ Gravy, Brussels Sprouts, Strawberries, 2% Milk	22 11:30a-12:30p Lunch Lemon Pepper Chicken, Baked Potato, Brussels Sprouts, Orange , 2% Milk <i>Sponsored by Tom Jarosz</i> 	23 11:30a-12:30p Lunch Sweet and Sour Meatballs, Brown Rice, Stir Fry Vegetable, Pineapple Chunks, 2% Milk	24 11:30a-12:30p Lunch Pot Roast, Mashed Potato w/ Gravy, Corn, Kiwi
27 11:30a-12:30p Lunch Chicken Drumsticks, Beans Baked Prince Charles Vegetables, Apricots	28 11:30a-12:30p Lunch Western Omelet, Redskin Potatoes, Broccoli and Cauliflower, Grapes, 2% Milk	29 11:30a-12:30p Lunch Baked Penne with Sausage, Vegetable Blend Prince Charles, Breadstick, Kiwi, 2% Milk	30 11:30a-12:30p Lunch Lemon Baked Fish, Redskin Potatoes, Green Beans, Pear, 2% Milk	31 11:30a-12:30p Lunch Pepper Steak, Brown Rice, Stir Fry Vegetable, Sugar Snap Peas, Kiwi, 2% Milk
Light Bites Southwest Side Salad, Chicken Tortilla Soup, Kiwi	Light Bites Turkey Sub, Minestrone Soup, Grapes	Light Bites Side Chef Salad, Cheesy Potato Soup, Pear	Light Bites Won Ton Soup, Mandarin Salad, Kiwi	Light Bites Ham & Cheese Sub, Cabbage and White Bean Soup, Pineapple

January 2025 - Activity Calendar

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
	31 CENTER CLOSED 	1 CENTER CLOSED 	2 9a Zumba Gold 10a Zumba Gold 1p Penny Bingo 3p Medicine Shoppe Bingo	3 10:45a Fit for the Aging 1p Pantry Bingo
6 10a Silver Sneakers 1-4p Chess Club 2-3p Diamond Art Club 2:30p-4:00p Bingocize	7 9a Friends of a Feather Quilting Group 9a Zumba Gold 10a Zumba Gold 12:30p Euchre (Events Room) 2:30p-4:00p Bingocize	8 10a Silver Sneakers 11a BP Check 12:30p Mahjong	9 9a Zumba Gold 10a Zumba Gold 1p Penny Bingo 4p-6p Chinese New Year Special Dinner	10 10a Walking Group @ Kirtland 10:30a Bible Study 10:45a Fit for the Aging 1p Pantry Bingo
13 10a Silver Sneakers 1-4p Chess Club 2-3p Diamond Art Club 2:30p-4:00p Bingocize 5:30p Billy McAllister Concert (Sinatra Tribute) *POSTPONED*	14 9a Zumba Gold 9a-2p Housing Counseling 10a Zumba Gold 12:30p Euchre 1p-2p Radon Presentation 2:30p-4:00p Bingocize	15 10a Silver Sneakers 11a New to Medicare 11a Alzheimer's Support @ the Brook 11a BP Check 12:30p Mahjong	16 9a Zumba Gold 10a Zumba Gold 1p Penny Bingo 1-5p Legal Assistance Appt. Required 1-3p Cooking Matters	17 10a Walking Group @ Kirtland 10:30a Bible Study 10:45a Fit for the Aging 1p Pantry Bingo
20 10a Silver Sneakers 1-4p Chess Club 2-3p Diamond Art Club 2:30p-4:00p Bingocize	21 9a Zumba Gold 10a Zumba Gold 11:30a Birthday Lunch 12:30p Euchre (Events Room) 2:30p-4:00p Bingocize 4:30p COA Board Meeting	22 10a Silver Sneakers 11a BP Check 12:30p Mahjong 2p-4:30p Commodities	23 9a Zumba Gold 10a Zumba Gold 1p Penny Bingo 1-3p Cooking Matters	24 10a Walking Group @ Kirtland 10:30a Bible Study 10:45a Fit for the Aging 1p Pantry Bingo
27 10a Silver Sneakers 1-4p Chess Club 2-3p Diamond Art Club 2:30p-4:00p Bingocize	28 9a Zumba Gold 10a Zumba Gold 12:30p Euchre 1:00p Jeopardy 2:30p-4:00p Bingocize	29 10a Silver Sneakers 11a BP Check 12:30p Mahjong	30 9a Zumba Gold 10a Zumba Gold 1p Penny Bingo 1-3p Cooking Matters	31 10a Walking Group @ Kirtland 10:30a Bible Study 10:45a Fit for the Aging 1p Pantry Bingo

Assistance to Help You Maintain Your Independence

COMMISSION ON AGING SERVICES, CLASSES & RESOURCES

Health Services

Foot Care Clinic - appointments only \$25 per visit - by Linda Russell — 4th Mondays, 9:00 am –4:30 pm - 4388 West M-72 Hwy, Grayling

Hearing Clinic - appointments only by Advantage Audiology. Call COA Office for appt.

Blood Pressure Checks - every Wednesday from 11:00 am to 1:00 pm.

Incontinence Supplies

Supplies are available for a donation of \$5.00

Medical Equipment Loan Closet

Items are available for a donation of \$5.00

Nutrition Services

Boost Plus: Discounted cost for liquid nutrition with a prescription from your doctor. \$30.00.

Commodities Food Distribution:

The 4th Wednesday of the month from 2:00 pm to 6:00 pm @ the Commission on Aging.

Congregate Meal Program:

Lunches: Mon-Fri from 11:30am -12:30pm.

Dinners: Mon-Thurs from 4:30pm - 5:30pm.

Suggested donation for seniors 60+ is \$4.00 and for age 60 or younger, cost is \$8.00.

Home Delivered Meals: (Meals on Wheels)

Meals are delivered Mondays, Wednesdays & Fridays, with frozen meals included for non-delivery days.

Senior Project Fresh:

Each summer, qualified seniors receive \$25 worth of coupons for fresh fruits & vegetables.

Resources

Information / Assistance: (989) 348-7123

Our COA staff are ready to assist you in finding answers to your questions or to assist you in finding available resources.

Legal Assistance:

by Jason R. Thompson, Law Office PLC

Free legal consultations available the 3rd Thursday of each month from 1-5pm

Housing Counseling

Get housing advice from Laurie Jamison from

Century 21 on the second Tuesday of each month from 9:00 am-2:00 pm.

Call 989-348-7123 for an appointment.

Medicaid/Medicare Assistance Program (MMAP)

Trained counselors help seniors decide which health insurance options are best for them.

Medical Transportation: COA can assist in arranging transportation for seniors who have no other means and refer to hired car services too.

Senior Gazette: This monthly newspaper which is full of information for seniors and caregivers.

Telephone Reassurance/Senior Companion:

COA provides weekly phone calls or home visits to older adults who want a reliable, caring phone call or home visit plus this is a safety check too.

In-Home Services

For those who need a little assistance maintaining their independence.

- Housekeeping
- Bathing Assistance
- Respite for Caregivers



Classes

AARP Driver Refresher Course: Offered once each year.

Tai Chi: Helps people with or without arthritis to improve balance, both mentally and physically, which helps significantly reduce the rate of falls.

Walk with Ease: Learn to walk safely and comfortably. The class runs on Mondays through October. Helps people learn to walk comfortably.

Fitness Programs

Fit for the Aging: This class focuses on maintaining safe fitness activities as we age. Seated and standing variations for every workout. Led by Volunteer: Sami Szydzik.

Silver Sneakers: exercise program designed for older adults. Great workout and adaptable to you. Nation's leading fitness program for Seniors. Led by Volunteer: Rich Ferrigan.

Zumba Gold: a lower-intensity version of the typical Zumba dancing fitness class. It was

designed to meet the anatomical and physiological needs of older adults. Led by Volunteers: Nancy Lemmen & Meredith Anderson and Cindy Johnson.

Cost for Services

Almost all COA services are available to Crawford County Residents on a suggested donation basis. Our programs are funded by Crawford County millage taxes along with Federal, State, and local grants. However, our needs are greater than covered by these sources. Your support through donations helps us to help more. **We are grateful!**



How We Served You in November 2024!

At the Senior Center

- We served **695** Congregate Meals

In-Home Services

- Delivered **3,656** home delivered meals.
- Provided **89.75** hours of respite care.
- We provided **302.25** hours of homemaker services.
- We provided **38.75** hours of bathing assistance services.

Important Phone Numbers:

Social Security

(800) 772-1213 or (866) 739-4802

Medicare (800) 633-4227

Veterans Administration (800) 827-1000

Alzheimer's Assistance (800) 272-3900

Crawford County Commission On Aging & Senior Center (989) 348-7123

Telephone Reassurance Service

Is for any older adult in Crawford County who lives alone or for anyone whether they get COA services or not.

A phone call is made on Tuesday or Thursday from 11am—1pm and serves two main purposes: a well-being check and to have a friendly conversation. This **free program** benefits so many and is easy to sign up for.

Contact In-Home Services, Kathy Meisner at (989) 348-7123



Listen online: Community Calendar for the COA Calendar of Events

aired daily by: **Blarney Stone Broadcasting Stations**

q100michigan.com upnorthsportsradio.com

to add events to calendar email: peyton@blarneystonebroadcasting.com



Upcoming Online Classes from the Area Agency on Aging

Upcoming Webinars
January 7, 2025: Caregiver Wellness Workshop (Every Tuesday through January 28th, 1:00 pm—2:30 pm)
January 9, 2025: Protect Yourself from Scams and Fraud
January 10, 2025 - March 14th, 2025 Caregiver Webinar Series (second Friday of the month) 1:00 pm—2:00 pm, journaling club to follow from 3:00 pm—4:00 pm
February 4, 2025-March 11, 2025, from 1:30pm-3:30pm: Diabetes PATH (Virtual)
February 13, 2025: Home Safety and Radon Matter of Balance (Virtual): January 15, 2025-March 5, 2025, from 1:00pm-3:00pm
 Caregiver Focus Group (Virtual) January 17th, 2025, 1:00 pm—2:30 pm
Powerful Tools for Caregivers (Virtual): February 3, 2025-March 10, 2025, from 1:00pm-3:00pm
Contact with Questions:
 Brooke Mainville
 Special Projects Coordinator
 (989) 358-4616 mainvilleb@nemcsa.org

See Page 9 for a full list of COA activities!

Coming Attractions: Save the Dates

Veteran's Coffee Hours Dates for 2025

Dates:

Thursday, January 9th
 Thursday, February 13th
 Thursday, March 13th
 Thursday, April 10th
 Thursday, May 8th
 Thursday, June 12th
 Thursday, July 10th
 Thursday, August 14th
 Thursday, September 11th
 Thursday, October 9th
 Thursday, November 13th
 Thursday, December 11th


Time:
 10:00-11:00 AM

At the American Legion Post #106
 More Info: (989) 344-3861

Versiti Blood Drives 2025

Monday, February 3rd	Monday, August 11th
Monday, April 7th	Monday, October 13th
Monday, June 9th	Monday, December 8th

All blood drives run from 10:30 am—3:30 pm. Register to donate in advance by visiting: www.donateblood.versiti.org/donor/schedules/county/



Secretary of State Mobile Office February Date

The SOS Mobile Office will be at the Commission on Aging on February 10th from 10:30 am—3:00 pm

Appointments are held at the Commission on Aging. Contact the COA to schedule an appointment within 30 days of the listed date. You can get your license, plates, and more taken care of all in one spot! Call 989-348-7123 to register.

Crawford County Commission on Aging And District Health Department #10 Health Awareness Presentations




Radon Awareness Presentation January 14th, 1:00pm-2:00pm	Stress Health Class May 13th 1:00pm-2:00pm	Cholesterol Presentation September 1:00pm-2:00pm
Heart Health Class February 11th, 1:00pm-2:00pm	Brain Health Class June 10th 1:00pm-2:00pm	Lung Health Class October 14th 1:00pm-2:00pm
Kidney Health Class March 11th, 1:00pm-2:00pm	Blood Health Class July 8th 1:00pm-2:00pm	Diabetes Health Class November 10th 1:00pm-2:00pm
Digestive Health Class April 8th, 1:00pm-2:00pm	Immunization Education Class August 12th 1:00pm-2:00pm	Fire Safety December 9th 1:00pm-2:00pm

Crawford County Commission on Aging 2025 Concert Series Sneak Peak

Billy McAllister and the Sinatra Tribute Show January 16th, 2025, 5:30 pm Tickets are \$15 / \$20 out of county	Michigan's Family Funny Man Meals on Wheels Fundraiser March 6th, 2025, 6:00 pm	AuSable River Dixie Land Band May 6th 2025, 6:00 pm Tickets are \$5.00 / \$10.00 out of county
The River Road Band February 27th, 2025, 5:30 pm Tickets are \$20 / \$25 out of county	Pub Runners April 17th, 2025, 6:00 pm Tickets are \$20 / \$25 out of county	Straight Forward Blue Grass Band June 23rd, 2025, 6:00 pm Tickets are \$10 / \$15 out of county

2025 Party Schedule

February 6th Pal-entines Day Party April 1st	September 8th Grand Parent's Day Party October 31st
April Fool's Party June 19th	Halloween Party November 20th
Back Yard Party July 3rd	Friends-Giving Party December 30th
Fourth of July Party	Noon-Years Eve

January Volunteer Spotlight: Pam & Ben Carr



buildings was a cemetery, so we would meet up every day at the cemetery to eat lunch together, because no one would think to look for us there,” Pam shared with a smirk. It’s not just the two of them who share these traits, according to Ben, their son is equally as funny, sharing, “Upon landing at the Flint Bishop airport, when we were moving here, my son said ‘Why on Earth would we want to move somewhere with white dirt?’”

Speaking of family, Pam shared, “My family is large, and they all have a good connection with each other, even as adults. They stay in touch and want to hang out with each other,” This sentiment seems to echo Ben’s feelings about family. Ben shared that his life motto is all about putting family first, “That’s just how I feel, it’s how it’s always been for me, I never really thought of a ‘why.’ I’ve always felt the health, wellbeing, and fulfillment of all of us was paramount.”

As we closed out our interview, I asked the same question I ask everyone, and was blown away by their responses.

“Why did you decided to volunteer with the COA?”

“We moved back here about a year ago, and we thought that this might be a wonderful way to reintegrate into this community, while doing something positive and productive for others. In a selfish way, we felt it would also be very rewarding for us,” Ben smiled sheepishly, “We came in for dinner one night, a year ago I think for the Harvest Dinner, and we had no idea about the Senior Center or what they did. But we got to talking with a number of folks and found that our experience then compelled us into wanting to help here.”

We are incredibly grateful to have both Ben and Pam Carr on our staff of volunteers. Thank you Ben and Pam for all that you do.

Interested in becoming a driver? Apply on our website at: <https://www.crawfordcoa.org/volunteer/volunteer-application>, or call 989-348-7123 today.

When I sat down with Ben and Pam Carr for their volunteer spotlight interview, I knew I was in for a treat.

“How would you describe yourself?” I asked.

Pam grew quiet for a moment, thinking through her answer carefully. “I would say I’m compassionate, kind, and adventurous.” When asked the same question, her husband Ben replied, “I’m quiet, shy, unassuming...” which was quickly shut down by his wife’s laugh and an exclamation of “And a liar!” After a moment of shared laughter between the two, Ben finished, “In all seriousness, I’d say I’m energetic, outgoing and inquisitive.”

“Originally, I am from Western Massachusetts. I was hired as a CEO of a resort development company in the Flint area, and that is what originally brought us to Michigan,” shared Ben. “From there we took over the operation of an RV park in Higgins Lake.”

“Higgins Hills RV Park in Roscommon,” Pam continued. “We lived and ran the place most of the 90s, selling the campground in the early 2000s.”

“After we were done operating the RV park, we moved on to owning an operating Quiet Sports Outfitters,” said Ben.

Something that makes Ben and Pam Carr stand out is their shared sense of humor, and their ability to make the best out of just about any circumstance.

“When Ben and I first started to date, our companies had a non-fraternization policy. We weren’t allowed to see other or be seen together. Well, across the street from our office

Upcoming Online Classes - MSU Ext.

Tai Chi for Better Sleep - Tuesday & Thursday AM
January 7, 2025 – February 27, 2025 9:00 - 10:30 am ET Zoom

Online A Matter of Balance starting Jan. 7 at 8am CT/9am ET
January 7, 2025 – February 25, 2025 Online

ONLINE: Sleep Education for Everyone Jan/Feb 2025

January 7, 2025 – February 11, 2025 Every Tuesday, 7:00-7:30pm Online via Zoom

Surviving and Thriving on a Fixed Income! (Webinar) - January 9, 2025

January 9, 2025 12:00PM – 1:00PM Zoom

Online - Mindfulness for Better SLEEP Jan/Feb Weekly

January 9, 2025 – February 13, 2025 Online via Zoom

Walk with Ease Self-Paced Series Jan/Feb 2025

January 10, 2025 – February 14, 2025 Online Via Zoom

Sleep Education for Everyone Program (SLEEP) - Virtual

January 10, 2025 – February 14, 2025 12:00 - 12:30 PM Online via Zoom

New Year, New You! Online webinar series

January 15, 2025 – December 17, 2025 Zoom

Tips to Build and Protect Your Credit – January 21, 2025

January 21, 2025 12:00PM – 1:00PM Zoom

Chronic Disease Personal Action Toward Health (PATH) Virtual Series

January 21, 2025 2:00PM – 4:00PM 2:00 - 4:00 PM EST. Online via Zoom

Coffee Hour Session: Changing Negative Self

January 23, 2025 8:30AM – 10:00AM Online Via Zoom Webinar

Tai Chi for Better Sleep--Mondays & Wednesdays, 2:00-3:30 pm ET

February 3, 2025 – April 2, 2025 2:00-3:30 pm ET Zoom

To register for any event visit: <https://www.canr.msu.edu/rlr/> and click on the Events tab

Grayling Save a lot

Half Gallon Milk \$1.49, Whole, 2%, 1% or Skim, Limit 2 w/ Coupon

PLEASE DO NOT DUPLICATE

Good From 1/1/25-1/31/25 One Coupon Per Family

VIKING ATHLETIC PASS

Bring this pass into Grayling High School between 9:00am and 3:30pm during the week and receive a free Lifetime Athletic Pass for any high school or middle school home athletic events. One per person, passholders must be 62 years of age or older.

Learn How to Cook, Shop, and Eat Healthy in the New Year

By Angela Cook, instructor of Cooking Matters

Are you looking for a fun and engaging way to kick off 2025? Join us for Cooking Matters for Adults, a free six-week nutrition program at the senior center starting in January! This series is designed to help you develop the skills and confidence to create healthy, delicious meals on a budget—all while having a great time with fellow participants. My name is Angela Cook, and I'll be your nutrition educator for this program. As a Community Nutrition Instructor with Michigan State University Extension, I'm passionate about helping people discover practical ways to improve their health and well-being. I'm thrilled to bring this interactive series to our community, and I can't wait to meet you! In each two-hour session, we'll explore topics like food preparation, cooking safety, smart grocery shopping, and nutrition basics. What makes this class unique is its hands-on approach—you'll prepare and sample recipes

right in class, and take home food to practice what you've learned. Here's what you'll gain from Cooking Matters for Adults:

Practical Skills: Learn easy-to-follow recipes and cooking techniques.

Confidence: Discover how to make healthier choices without breaking the bank.

Support: Connect with a group of friendly classmates who share your goals.

Resources: Take home a recipe book and earn a certificate of completion.

Whether you're cooking for one or feeding a family, this program will provide tools and tips you can use every day. Spots are limited, so don't wait—sign up today to secure your place in this fun and rewarding class series. To register or learn more, call me at (989) 344-3264 ext. 3 or stop by the senior center office. Let's make 2025 your healthiest and happiest year yet!

Medicare Advantage Open Enrollment ends 03/31

Did you know that if you're unhappy with your Medicare Advantage Plan (Medicare Part C), you have options? Each year, there's a Medicare Advantage Open Enrollment Period from January 1 – March 31. During this time, if you're in a Medicare Advantage Plan and want to change your health plan, you can do one of these:

- Switch to a different Medicare Advantage Plan with or without drug coverage
- Go back to Original Medicare and, if needed, also join a Medicare Prescription Drug Plan.

Call Tammy Findlay @ 989-348-7123 to schedule an appointment if you need assistance in reviewing your plans.

The Area Agency on Aging Donates Adaptive Equipment to COA

The Area Agency on Aging (AAA) is a local organization that supports older adults and caregivers by providing access to services that promote independence and quality of life. They offer resources like meal programs, transportation, caregiver support, and health services tailored to the needs of older adults. Their goal is to help individuals age comfortably in their communities while addressing their unique challenges. Recently, they donated inner lipped plates, cups for both hot and cold beverages with lids, handles, and straws, and built-up silverware to the Senior Center. What are the purposes of these new tools? Built-up silverware features larger, ergonomic handles that make it easier for individuals with limited grip strength, arthritis, or other mobility challenges to hold and use utensils. Inner-lipped plates provide additional support for scooping food items onto utensils. Insulated cold and hot cups with lids help

people by serving as mobility or dexterity aid. The secure lids prevent spills, making it easier and safer to drink independently. If anyone would like to use them during our regular meals or special dinners, please let the kitchen staff or reception know. We hope this will help make your dining experience more comfortable. If there are any other adaptive items you feel could help improve accessibility, please contact Kate Moshier, Nutrition Manager, by calling 989-348-7123. Thank you to our partners at Region 9 for the Donation of these accessibility items.



New to



Seminar

Are you turning age 65 in 2025? Are you confused by Medicare? How does Medicare work and what does it cover? What options do you have to get the coverage you need? Join us on **Wednesday, January 15th, 2025 @ 11:00 AM** for a presentation that will help demystify the issues surrounding Medicare. Tammy Findlay, advocacy coordinator, will discuss the various parts of Medicare including what is covered or not covered, Medicare Supplements and Prescription Drug Plans, and how Medicare recipients who have low income can get assistance paying for Prescription Drug Plans and the Medicare Part B premium. For more information email the CCCOA advocacy@crawfordcoa.org or call (989) 348-7123.

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 Phone: 989-448-2500
 Fax: 989-448-7006
 306 State Street
 Grayling, MI 49738
 Phone: 989-745-6667
 Fax: 989-745-6668

January Word Search Puzzle

Z V I U O C W C G C W X N T V A B G U T V
 L S N L E B R G C V T Y A P Q M P D U D A
 V V W Q H A O O G Z T R F D J J L L W G C
 M B J D A U I C R O F K F G P D M A W I B
 H I T E P F L A S H A J D L F P F W E F E
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 S G B P X O G D H S J F R L E S S G L M N
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 E U L K G D G F J L G A W L O O I A G T O
 S G B P L V V I J R U L S I J Q S Y I X D

Year
 Eve
 Ball
 Party
 Toast
 Clock
 Cheer
 Dance
 Happy
 Bells
 Drink
 Spark
 Light
 Goal
 Hope
 Smile
 Dream
 Music
 Horn
 Fire
 Glow
 Wish
 Night
 Kiss
 Noise
 Start
 Cheers
 Count
 Stars
 Glam
 Shiny
 Lucky
 Flash
 Goals
 Plans
 Glitter
 Fun
 Glow
 Bright
 Faith
 Renew
 Wishes
 Laugh
 Greet
 Fest
 Lights
 Hopeful
 Bold
 Raise
 Time

Kate's Kitchen Corner



Ingredients for Tuscan White Bean Soup:

- ¼ Cup Olive Oil extra virgin
- 1 medium Onion, diced
- 4 cloves garlic, minced. (Or 3 tsp. pre-minced garlic or 2tsp dried)
- 2 Carrots, peeled and sliced
- 2 Celery Stalks, sliced
- 3 15 Ounce Cans white beans. Cannellini or Great Northern are good choices
- 2 Bay Leaves
- 1 Tsp Thyme
- 1 Tsp Oregano
- ¼-½ Teaspoon Red Pepper Flakes
- 5-6 Cups Broth of your choice. (I like chicken or vegetable)
- ¼-1/2 tsp Salt.
- ¼ Teaspoon Ground Black Pepper
- 3 Cups Fresh Spinach (Or kale if preferred)

Steps:

- Heat the oil on medium-low heat in a Dutch oven or stock pot.
- When oil is hot, add carrots and celery. Stir to make sure your veggies are evenly coated with oil and stir often for 4-7 minutes. You want them to soften but not blacken. Next add your onions and stir to coat with oil, then continue to stir until onions are translucent, another 5 or so minutes. If vegetables are browning too quickly, lower your heat and stir more often. You can also add broth early if need be and cook the soup longer to soften your veggies.
- Add garlic, if using fresh or minced, and stir continuously for 30 more seconds, then add around 1/4c of the broth. Stir quickly while scraping any food residue off the bottom of your pot. This is called deglazing and adds extra flavor to your finished soup. If using dried garlic, go straight to adding the 1/4c broth. Then, add the rest of your broth, seasonings (including dried garlic if using), and drained and rinsed beans.
- Bring to a boil, then reduce to a simmer. Cover the soup and let simmer for at least 20 minutes, or longer if needed to completely soften your carrots.
- Taste and, if needed, adjust seasonings to your preference.
- Remove from heat and add spinach, then stir in until it wilts.
- Note: For a thicker texture, take 2 cups of the soup before adding the spinach and transfer to a blender, blend until smooth and return to the pot. Or use an immersion blender right in the pot to blend roughly 2 cups. Bring it back to a simmer before adding the spinach.

Social Security Cost of Living Adjustment

Social Security benefits and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) payments for more than 72.5 million Americans will increase 2.5% in 2025, the Social Security Administration announced.

On average, Social Security retirement benefits will increase by about \$50 per month starting in January. Over the last decade the cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) increase has averaged about 2.6%. The COLA was 3.2% in 2024. Some other adjustments that take effect in January of each year are based on the increase in average wages.

Based on that increase, the maximum amount of earnings subject to the Social Security tax (taxable maximum) is slated to increase to \$176,100 from \$168,600. Social Security begins notifying people about their new benefit amount by mail starting in early December. This year, for the first time, Social Security beneficiaries will receive a newly designed and improved COLA notice that makes it easier for customers to find the information they need most.

The simplified COLA notice is now only one page, uses plain and personalized language, and provides exact dates and dollar amounts of a person's new benefit amount and any deductions.

The Social Security Act provides for how the COLA is calculated. The Social Security Act ties the annual COLA to the increase in the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) as determined by the Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics. To read more, please visit www.ssa.gov/cola.

Medicare or Medicaid?

Medicare is a federal health insurance program for individuals age 65 or older; persons under age 65 who have a disability and have received SSDI benefits for 24 months; are of any age with End-Stage Renal Disease (ESRD) that requires dialysis or a kidney transplant or with Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS, also known as "Lou Gehrig's Disease"). It consists of four parts:

- Part A: Hospital Insurance (premium-free for most people)
 - Part B: Medical Insurance (premium based on adjusted [gross income](#))
 - Part C: Medicare Advantage Plans (optional coverage for Medicare recipients who have Parts A and B that provides supplemental benefits through private insurance companies at an additional premium)
 - Part D: Prescription Drug Plan (optional coverage through various private insurance companies; premiums and coverage vary).
- Low-income beneficiaries can get [Extra Help](#) paying for their Part D premiums by filing an application with Social Security.

Medicaid is a federal and state program that provides health coverage to millions of Americans with limited income and resources, including eligible people with disabilities. Medicaid is administered by states, according to federal requirements, and funded jointly by states and the federal government. Medicaid also offers benefits not normally covered by Medicare, including nursing home care and personal care services.

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**Veteran's
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American Legion Post #106
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Changes to Special Dinners for 2025

New Special Dinner Guidelines

Due to increasing numbers in attendance at our Special Dinners, the following guidelines have been set into place. Please read over them carefully, as they go into effect beginning in January.

- Call 348-7123 by 2 pm for reservations on the day of the dinner for parties of 7 or more people.
- Reservation seating is for 4:00 pm only, we will not be accepting any reservations for after the 4:00 pm service.
- No seating before 3:30 pm is permitted.
- All diners in the party need to be present in order to be seated.
- Serving begins at 4:00 pm
- Once finished, please move from the dining room to the lobby for continued socialization.

Thank you for being here through the last 20 years of dinners and for continuing to help us make them a success, hopefully for 20 more. Happy New Year.

A Letter from Kate Moshier, Nutrition Manager

It's a brand-new year and I'm excited to say that it brings some brand-new things with it. I am aware that not everyone likes new things, but I hope you will keep an open mind and embrace some changes that are being made to our Special Dinners. You have joined us for monthly fun and fellowship for more than 20 years now and our monthly themes have remained the same, but I think even the most beloved party themes can use an occasional rest. We will not have a new theme every month, but we are shaking things up this year!

We are starting on January 9th with a "Chinese New Year" theme and will be serving a "Chinese Buffet" Dinner. Please, don't let the name mislead you, this meal will be served the same way as all our special dinners and no one will be walking through the line to serve themselves, but your server will bring you a plate piled high with your buffet favorites. We will be serving Orange Chicken with Pea Pods, Chinese Pepper Steak, Fried Rice, Vegetable Lo Mein, Egg Rolls, Bananas in Strawberry Glaze, Chocolate Sheet Cake, Fortune Cookies, and an Oolong "Chinese restaurant blend" hot tea will be available to those who want it.

As we move through this new year of special dinners, please let me know what you think, talk to me when you stop in for lunch or other activities.

Chinese New Year Special Dinner Preview

Ring in the Year of the Dragon with a festive feast at our Chinese New Year Special Dinner! Join us for Orange Chicken with Pea Pods, Chinese Pepper Steak, Fried Rice, Vegetable Lo Mein, Egg Rolls, Bananas in Strawberry Glaze, Chocolate Sheet Cake, Fortune Cookies, and an Oolong "Chinese restaurant blend" hot tea. This month's give away is a free pedicure and is sponsored by Kim's Magic Nails.



Chinese New Year Special Dinner



January 9th
4:00 pm—6:00 pm
\$8.00 for those under 60, a recommended donation of \$4.00 for those over 60.



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