

Crawford County *Senior Gazette* December 2024



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Grayling, MI

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The Night I Met Santa Claus

By Toby Neal



I never expected to meet Santa Claus. The idea seemed reserved for children who waited eagerly for his arrival on Christmas Eve, not for adults like me who had long left those childhood fantasies behind. Yet, as the December chill settled in, I found myself on an extraordinary journey to the North Pole, invited for a once-in-a-lifetime interview with the man himself.

Santa Claus—St. Nicholas, Father Christmas, Kris Kringle—he has gone by many names over the centuries, and each name evokes warmth, generosity, and the true spirit of Christmas. As I approached Santa's workshop, I was filled with the childlike

wonder I thought I had left behind. The workshop was alive with cheer, the sounds of elves laughing and working alongside the jingling of bells filling the crisp, cold air. And then, I saw him: Santa, sitting comfortably by a roaring fire, a twinkle in his eye, and that familiar belly-shaking laugh.

"HoHoHo! Welcome!" he boomed. "Come in, come in. It's cold outside, but nothing warms the heart like good company and conversation. Let's have a chat."

As I sat down beside Santa, the nervousness melted away. He was everything I had imagined as a child—jovial, warm, and impossibly kind. I began with the question that had been on my mind since I received the invitation. "Santa, you've been delivering gifts for centuries now—what keeps you going year after year?"

Santa's eyes twinkled as he replied, "The smiles on everyone's face, no matter what age—who doesn't enjoy seeing me? Everyone, young and old, seems to soften and even sing to me sometimes. And of course, the cookies—I receive lots of cookies!" He chuckled, patting his belly. "The joy of spreading love and happiness keeps me going. There's nothing like the feeling of knowing you've brought a little magic into someone's life."

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 - Thursday
8:30am to 6:00pm
Friday
8:30am to 4:30pm

4388 West M-72 Hwy
Grayling, MI 49738

Phone
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Smartphone Scan to our Website



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Wilson**

The Senior Gazette

4388 West M-72 Hwy, Grayling, MI 49738

The Senior Gazette is published monthly by the Crawford County Commission on Aging.

The publication is distributed free to Crawford County residents by direct mail and at local businesses.

“Views and comments expressed in the Senior Gazette are not necessarily the comments or views of the Crawford County Commission on Aging, its staff or its board. The Senior Gazette is funded by advertising dollars, but the Commission on Aging does not necessarily endorse any one business or organization.”

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

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Cooks: Megan Hagle, Dalton Keir

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

Homemakers:

Kathy, Jill, Susan & Danette

November Birthdays

Donna Burke 12/2
Clara Gibbs 12/3
Roxie Chumack 12/9
Veronica Terrell 12/10
Jackie Gerhardi 12/11
Richard Persing 12/15
Loren Crampton 12/21
Marilyn Hawkins 12/26

**Senior Center Birthday Lunch
Tuesday, December 17th,
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.

Advance Care Planning

December 3rd: 10 am—12 pm
Register by calling 989-348-0296



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

GIVING

General Giving

GIVING

Although the Crawford County Commission on Aging is supported by state & federal grants, Crawford County millage monies, Community Foundation of Northeast Michigan, Crawford United, the Great Lakes Energy People Fund, and the Region 9 Area Agency on Aging, we could not do what we do without also having the support of people just like you. Gifts can be made to the Crawford County Commission on Aging at any time during the year. If you have a specific program that is dear to your heart, your gift may be "restricted" for support of that program.

WANT TO DONATE BUT NOT SURE HOW?

WAYS TO DONATE

ONLINE @ CRAWFORDCOA.ORG/MAKE-A-DONATION!

MAIL A CHECK TO: COA, 4388 West M-72 Hwy GRAYLING MI 49738

IN PERSON @ THE SENIOR CENTER

BY CREDIT CARD OVER THE PHONE: 989-348-7123



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**

General Donations from:

Scott Foster
Betty Jo Bresmon
Janet Gross
Mark & Shirley Sanders
Peter & Jackie Urcheck
Kirsten Lietz
Arauco
Bruce Jarome
Nancy Billingham
Michael Jordan
Dennis & Mickie Meyers
Thank You!

Senior Center Updates and more!

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. It's a great way to brag about the awesome activities, programs, and pictures we have for you plus include your family in events.

facebook.com/CrawfordCOA/
Like, Love or Share
Please help us grow our impact with free publicity.
Scan below to visit our page!



Scan here!

Hometown Heroes

\$300 per day or more to fully-fund Meals on Wheels

Running Talley of Support: \$12,815, Thank you!

40 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 Nancy Lemmen and Mark Hansen for donating for December 8th, in honor of their son's birthday. Help us keep providing exceptional care and meals for our local elderly. Donate today!

Be our Hometown Heroes.

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.

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 & Olie Miller
Mary Jo Buschbacher	Suzanne Ostahowski
Monte Burmeister	Mark Ostahowski
Ben & Pam Carr	Ron Pagereski
Debbie Carrigan	Sharen Perkins
Donna Brown	Lois Platt
Judy George-Crook	Keith Radwanski
Caroline Diponio	Tom & Deb Rawlings
Diana Doremire	Chuck & Robin Rodgers
Rich Ferrigan	Jonathan Shazri
Anna Fradl	Sally Slicker
Janet Gilbert	Janis Smith
Sherry Haag	Richard Smith
Sharron Hagerman	Ann Stephenson
Donn Handy	Tim & Susie Swedine
Val Hendricks	Sami Szydik
Susan Hensler	Brad Summers
Colin Hunter	Ellen Thompson
Liedewey Hunter	Ken Thurston
Cindy Johnson	Martha Trenkner
Glenn & Lorelei King	Kate Wagner
Alice Lee	Ernie Windolph
Nancy Lemmen	Carol Wilder
Kirsten Lietz	Curtis Williams
Sandy Marshall	Sandy Woods
Dan & Karen McCarthy	
Barb & Dean McCray	
Rick McBride	
Mike Miller	



Giving Tuesday December 3rd

The Crawford County Commission on Aging is excited to be one of 60 nonprofits participating in Giving Tuesday Northeast Michigan this year through the Community Foundation for Northeast Michigan (CFNEM)! Any donations made to our organization through CFNEM on that day will support the Meals on Wheels program. 100% of your donation goes directly to us. When you make a gift to the COA on December 3rd at cfnem.org/givingtuesday, every penny will be put to use where we need it most.

Chair Yoga

December 4th and 18th, 12:30 pm

The COA will welcome Chair Yoga instructor Patty Clark, ERYT, from The Gift on December 4th and 18th at 12:30 pm. This class is free of charge, but advance registration is required to ensure enough chairs for participants. Please call 989-348-7123 to register.

Bronner's Trip

December 5th, 9:00 am—4:00 pm

Cost is \$55.00 for in county, and \$60.00 for out of county. Price includes bus fare and lunch at Oma's restaurant.

Secretary of State Mobile Office Visit

December 9th, 10:00 am—3:00 pm

Come out and get your tedious chores taken care of. The prices for a visit are as follows, and all normal rules will apply:

- State ID Renewal: \$10.00
- State ID Replacement: \$10.00
- Convert to Real ID: \$10.00
- Driver's License Renewal: \$18.00
- Replacement: \$9.00
- Convert to Real ID: \$9.00

License Plate renewal: Varies
Replacement Plate: \$5.00
Replacement Registration: \$5.00
Transfer Title: \$15.00

For more information, or additional pricing, please contact the COA at 989-348-7123.

Gaylord Community Orchestra Concert December 9th, 6:00 pm—7:00 pm

Celebrate the season with the Gaylord Community Orchestra's Christmas Concert! Enjoy a festive evening of timeless holiday classics and joyful carols. Don't miss this magical musical experience to get you in the holiday spirit! Tickets are \$10.00 per person, \$15.00 for out-of-county residents.

Christmas Karaoke with Alice Snyder December 16th, 12:30pm —1:30 pm

Get ready to belt out your favorite holiday tunes! Join COA Director Alice Snyder for a Christmas Karaoke Extravaganza, where we'll be singing all the best holiday classics and crowd-pleasers. Whether you're a karaoke pro or a first-time singer, this event is all about fun and festive cheer! Grab a mic and sing along with friends, and enjoy a few surprises along the way. Let's make this a holiday sing-along to remember.

Christmas Sing-Along with Sarah Smaling December 23rd, 11:30 am—12:30 pm

Join us for a lively Christmas Sing-Along during lunch with the talented Sarah Smaling! Dive into the holiday spirit as we sing everyone's favorite festive songs. Whether you're humming along or singing your heart out, this event will make your holiday season merry and bright. Let's fill the room with joy on our last day together before Christmas break

Noon-Years Eve Party

December 30th, 12:15 pm

Ring in the new year a little early at the COA's "Noon Year's Eve" party on December 30th! Join us at 12:15 pm for a special toast with sparkling grape juice and cookies.



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Preview of Christmas Special Dinner

The snow is falling and friends are calling, so come out and enjoy our Christmas Special Dinner on December 12th. The menu for the Christmas Special Dinner is Spiral-cut Ham, Roasted Carrots, Potato Medley, Multi-grain Bread Rolls, and Red Velvet Cupcakes. This month's door prize is a brand new cooking set, and is donated by the Grayling Michigan State University Extension Office (MSU-E).

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY | Extension



Continued: Interview with Santa Claus

Santa's answer resonated deeply with me. His delight wasn't just in the act of delivering presents but in the joy he saw in others. It was a humbling reminder that giving is its own reward, and that magic can still be found in the simplest of things. Looking at my surroundings I then asked, "what does Christmas Eve look like behind the scenes at the North Pole? Is there a lot of excitement among the elves as you prepare for the big night?"



"Excitement?" Santa laughed. "To say that the elves get excited is an understatement! The workshops are buzzing with music and laughter. Lots of cheering with cookies and cocoa. Lots and lots of cookies! It's a celebration for us too—a culmination of all the hard work throughout the year. The energy is contagious. The elves love what they do, and that's what makes the magic possible."

While one could imagine it, I actually saw it: a workshop alive with the sounds of joy and anticipation, where every toy made was infused with love. It reminded me that Christmas, at its heart, is about the joy of creating and giving, not just receiving. With childhood joy returning, I asked Santa, "with so many letters coming in from children all over the

world, how do you decide who gets what? Do you ever receive a letter that surprises you?"

"Oh, I have special elves that keep track of all the Christmas wish lists," Santa explained. "They work tirelessly, sorting through the letters we receive and the notes from my 'helper' Santas around the world. We do our best to give everyone something special, even if it's not everything they asked for. What really warms my heart is when children ask for gifts not

for themselves, but for others. That's when you know they've truly embraced the spirit of Christmas." It was clear from Santa's answer that Christmas is about more than material gifts. It's about the thoughtfulness behind them, the selflessness of giving to others. His mention of being surprised by some letters struck me—children, despite their innocence, often have an extraordinary capacity for generosity. So I asked him, "How do you manage to visit every single house in just one night? Is there a special magic behind it that we don't know about?"

Santa's eyes twinkled with mischief. "Ah, there are many time zones across the world, and my reindeer have special powers at Christmas. They can fly at super speeds thanks to our 'Christmas Star-Dust' that the elves make up each year. That helps me make the rounds, but I can't give away all my secrets!" He gave a wink, leaving just enough mystery to keep the

magic alive.

Not wanting Santa to reveal more of his secrets, I decided to ask him, "What's your favorite Christmas tradition that families celebrate, and why does it mean so much to you?" Santa didn't hesitate in answering! "Watching family gatherings. People being especially nice to each other—whether it's giving to the Red Kettle, toys for tots, or other philanthropy efforts. People helping people. That's what Christmas is all about. It's not the gifts under the tree that matter most—it's the love that we share with each other."

Santa's love for togetherness and generosity came through in every word. His joy wasn't tied to the material side of Christmas but to the moments of human connection it fostered. It was at that moment that I heard the baying of reindeer from somewhere outside of his workshop which prompted me to ask him my next question. "We've heard the reindeer are the stars of the show on Christmas Eve—what can you tell us about their personalities? Is Rudolph really the leader of the pack?"

"Oh, Rudolph's the leader all right," Santa confirmed, smiling. "But like any good leader, he listens to the team and takes care of them. He makes sure they're fed—carrots for them, cookies and milk for me! Each reindeer has their own personality, and they all play a part in making Christmas Eve run smoothly." Santa's words were a reminder that even magical creatures work as a team, and leadership is as much about listening and caring as it is about guiding.

I am sure as you are reading this you might



even think I am making it up. Ole Saint Nick is used to that. "Santa," I asked nervously, "What would you say to someone who doesn't believe in you or the magic of Christmas?" Santa's expression grew serious for a moment. "Watch a child or a lonely adult receive a gift—whether it's a card, a toy, or a visit. Just seeing the smile and sometimes happy tears will soften even the hardest hearts. That is Christmas." His words were simple but profound.

Wanting to, but knowing I shouldn't overstay my welcome, I said, "finally, Santa, what's your wish for the world this Christmas season? If you could bring one special gift to everyone, what would it be? Santa paused thoughtfully. "A feeling of peace and gratitude. I wish everyone could be happy with who they are and feel a part of something bigger. Toys will be forgotten, but a smile is universal, and a hug will leave a lasting impression on a heart. Oh, and did I mention cookies? HoHoHo! Who doesn't have a favorite cookie?"

As our conversation ended, I couldn't help but reflect on the true meaning of Christmas that Santa had shared with me. It wasn't about the presents, the decorations, or even the cookies (though those were certainly a fun part of it!). It was about the love, the giving, and the connections we make with each other. Santa's joy wasn't just in delivering gifts but in spreading kindness and hope.

As I left the North Pole, my heart felt lighter, filled with the warmth of Santa's words. I had come seeking answers but left with a renewed sense of wonder and belief in the magic of Christmas. The man in the red suit had reminded me that the greatest gift we can give is love—and that's a gift that lasts all year long.

2025 TRIP SURVEY

Please select 5 places you would sign up to go to on a COA Field Trip.

- Detroit Tigers Baseball Game
- Detroit Lions Football Game
- TC Pit Spitters Baseball Game
- Mackinac Island Lilac Festival
- Holland Tulip Festival
- Beaver Island
- Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary
- Lavender Farm
- Bronner's Christmas Store
- The Village at Grand Traverse
- Mushroom Houses Tour
- Fall Colors Boat Tour
- Butterfly House and Bug Zoo
- Meijer Gardens
- Shipwreck Museum
- Dow Gardens
- Glass Blowing Factory
- Detroit Eastern Market
- Music House Museum
- Pictured Rocks
- South Manitou Island

Please cut out this survey, fill it out, and return to the Crawford County Commission on Aging and Senior Center.

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>.

Thank you Arauco for Supporting Pet Palooza

On October 23rd, Arauco staff held a fundraiser to support the 2025 Pet Palooza, hosting a taco bar where attendees could enjoy a meal for a good cause. All proceeds went to the Pet Palooza program, which provides essential vaccines, microchips, and supplies to help older adults and low-income pet owners. The fundraiser helped raise \$300.00 for the program. Thank you to all who donated!

Medicare Savings Eligibility Presentation

If your monthly income is up to \$1,275 in 2024 (\$1,724 for couples) and your assets are below specified limits, you may be eligible for Extra Help. What's a better gift than lower cost on medication. Join Tammy Findlay for a short presentation on Medicare Savings Eligibility on Thursday, December 5th @ 10:30 am. Call 989-348-7123 for more information on this program.

Adopt an Older Adult for Christmas

Call 989-348-7123 or stop by to pick up a tag for a Christmas present for an older adult in need! Each tag on the tree will have a suggested item based on what people are in need of. Pick up a tag, purchase the gift, bring it back, and we will wrap it and ensure it gets to the older adult who needs it. Gifts are anonymous.

Some COA based gift ideas include:

Meal coupons: (\$4.00 age 60+, \$8.00 under 60)

Sponsor a trip: \$100.00 per older adult.

Dial-A-Ride Tickets: 50¢ a piece. We will get the passes.



The Scoop on Healthy Living with Jan Williamson, RN

As we get older, our immune systems tend to weaken over time, putting us at higher risk for certain diseases.

All adults ages 60 years or older should make sure they're up to date on the vaccines listed below. You may need other vaccines based on other factors, too. Talk with your doctor to learn which vaccines are recommended for you.

COVID-19 VACCINE

CDC recommends COVID-19 vaccination for everyone aged 6 months and older. People ages 65 years and older should receive 2 doses of any 2024-2025 COVID-19 vaccine, spaced 6 months apart. We'd all like to think COVID-19 was a one-time event but unfortunately it wasn't. It's still out there and older adults are more vulnerable to complications.

FLU VACCINE

All adults need a seasonal flu vaccine every year. The Flu vaccine is especially important for people with chronic health conditions. Flu is often mistaken for a "stomach bug" but it's actually a respiratory illness. It can be far more severe for older adults and cause complications if we have Diabetes, Heart and Lung Disease or are immunocompromised.

PNEUMOCOCCAL VACCINE

CDC recommends pneumococcal vaccination for all adults who never received a pneumococcal conjugate vaccine and are age 65 years or older. As you age, your immune system doesn't work as well as it once did. You're more likely to have trouble fighting off a pneumonia infection.

SHINGLES VACCINE

Adults 50 years and older should get two doses of the shingles vaccine to prevent shingles and complications from the disease. Shingles is common. 1 in 3 adults will have Shingles in their lifetime. Shingles is also painful and can have serious complications including long-term nerve pain, hearing loss, blindness, brain inflammation, or death.

RESPIRATORY SYNCYTIAL VIRUS (RSV) VACCINE

Adults aged 60 through 74 years at increased risk of severe RSV and all adults aged 75 years or older should get a single dose of RSV vaccine. RSV vaccine can prevent lower respiratory tract disease caused by respiratory syncytial virus (RSV)

TD OR TDAP VACCINE

Every adult should get the Tdap (tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis) vaccine once if they did not receive it as an adolescent to protect against pertussis (whooping cough), and then a Td (tetanus, diphtheria) booster shot every 10 years.

& that's
THE SCOOP
ON HEALTHY LIVING



We cannot thank you enough for your unwavering dedication and support of the Crawford County Commission on Aging and Senior Center over the past 20+ years. You've been a fierce advocate for older adults, from providing Medicine Shoppe Bingo coupons to giving us access to the Medical Supply Loan Closet. You've supported our Senior Gazette, purchased magazine subscriptions, and have supported us in so many other ways. We are incredibly grateful for all you've done.



COA Welcomes New Employees



Dalton Keir was recently hired in as a cook for the Commission on Aging. Dalton is a long-time Grayling resident. He has been a cook for 10 years. Dalton is a video-game enthusiast, loves cats,

and enjoys dungeons and dragons. Dalton's favorite thing to cook is Swedish meatballs, and shared that he especially loves to cook them for wife, Heather. Dalton learned his skills from The Lot in South Carolina, a restaurant known for their fresh food.

Tammy's Tips

While the weather is still mild, and there is no snow or ice, it's a good time to put up those Christmas decorations. Waiting too long is a risk of falling on ice or snow. And it is much more enjoyable putting them up in pleasant weather and not freezing your fingers off if you wait until late fall or early winter.



Medical Equipment Spotlight: Walkers

By Kathy Meisner

- o Easy push-button mechanisms may be operated by fingers, palms or side of hand.
- o Each side operates independently to allow easy movement through narrow spaces and greater stability while standing.
- o Sturdy 1" diameter aluminum construction ensures maximum strength while remaining lightweight.
- o Rear glide cap allows for walker to slide easily and smoothly over most surfaces.
- o Vinyl-contoured hand grip.
- o Comes with or without wheels.






The Crawford County Commission on Aging has walkers with or without wheels available along with other medical equipment for older adults 60 and over. Please call Kathy at (989) 348-7123 to see if we have what you might need.

December 2024 - Meal Calendar

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
2 11:30a-12:30p Lunch Chicken Tenders, Cheesy Mashed Potatoes, Broccoli and Cauliflower, Orange	3 11:30a-12:30p Lunch Balsamic Chicken, Tomato Parmesan Pasta, Italian Blend Vegetable, Orange	4 11:30a-12:30p Lunch Chicken Stir Fry, Brown Rice, Sugar Snap Peas, Apricots	5 11:30a-12:30p Lunch Lasagna, Mixed Vegetables, Grapes	6 11:30a-12:30p Lunch Roast Turkey, Mashed Potatoes & Gravy, Peas & Onions, Orange
9 11:30a-12:30p Lunch BBQ Pork Sandwich, Dill and Garlic Potatoes, Crinkle Cut Carrots, Kiwi In memory of Nancy Lemmen and Mark Hansen's Son's Birthday. 	10 11:30a-12:30p Lunch Western Omelet, Redskin Potatoes, Broccoli and Cauliflower, Grapes	11 11:30a-12:30p Lunch Lemon Pepper Chicken, Baked Potato, Brussels Sprouts, Orange	12 11:30a-12:30p Lunch BBQ Chicken, Fried Cabbage with Bacon, Beans Baked, Grapes 4-6pm Christmas Dinner Spiral-cut Ham, Roasted Carrots, Potato Medley, Multi-grain Bread Rolls, and Red Velvet Cupcakes	13 11:30a-12:30p Lunch Sloppy Joe on Bun, Green Beans, Carrots, Burst O' Berries
11:30a-12:30p Lunch Chicken Cordon Bleu, Mashed Potatoes & Gravy, Green Beans, Pineapple	17 Birthday Lunch 11:30a-12:30p Lunch Spaghetti and Meatballs, Broccoli, Cantaloupe & Honeydew, Breadsticks	18 11:30a-12:30p Lunch Hamburger Stroganoff, Green Beans, Apricots	19 MEAL DELIVERY DAY 11:30a-12:30p Lunch Macaroni & Cheese with Ham, Harvest Blend Vegetables, Grapes	20 11:30a-12:30p Lunch Pork Roast, Baked Potato, Green Beans, Pear
23 11:30a-12:30p Lunch Breaded Fish Fillet, Cheesy Mashed Potatoes, Crinkle Cut Carrots, Pineapple	24 CLOSED! MERRY CHRISTMAS! 	25 CLOSED! MERRY CHRISTMAS 	26 MEAL DELIVERY DAY 11:30a-12:30p Lunch Cheese Ravioli w/Sauce, Asparagus, Italian Blend, Grapes	27 11:30a-12:30p Lunch Pot Roast, Mashed Potato w/ Gravy, Corn, Kiwi
30 11:30a-12:30p Lunch Chicken Drumsticks, Beans Baked Prince Charles Vegetables, Apricots	31 CLOSED! HAPPY NEW YEAR! 	Regular dinner at the Commission on Aging will be pausing effective December 1st, 2024-April of 2025. This means that the Commission on Aging will now be closed at 4:30 pm Monday-Friday. This change will not affect Meals on Wheels. This change will only affect regular daily dinners. Special Dinners will continue as regularly scheduled. Thank you for your understanding.		
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

December 2024 - Activity Calendar

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
2 10a Silver Sneakers 1-4p Chess Club 2-3p Diamond Art Club	3 9a Friends of a Feather Quilting Group 9a Zumba Gold 10a Zumba Gold 12:30p Euchre Giving Tuesday You can make a gift to the COA by visiting: cfnem.org/givingtuesday	4 10a Silver Sneakers 11a BP Check 12:30p Mahjong 12:30p Chair Yoga	5 9a Zumba Gold 9a Trip to Bronners 10:30a Medicare Savings Eligibility Presentation 10a Zumba Gold 1p Penny Bingo 3p Medicine Shoppe Bingo 3p-4p Daylight Diamonds	6 10:45a Fit for the Aging 1p Pantry Bingo
9 9:00a-4:30p Foot Clinic –Appt. Required 10a Silver Sneakers 10a-3p SOS Mobile Office 1-4p Chess Club 2-3p Diamond Art Club 6p Gaylord Community Orchestra Concert	10 9a-2p Housing Counseling Class 9a Zumba Gold 10a Zumba Gold 12:30 p Euchre (Events Room)	11 10a Silver Sneakers 10a Christmas Wreath Art Class with Bea Patrick 11a BP Check 12:30p Mahjong	12 9a Zumba Gold 10a Zumba Gold 1p Penny Bingo 3p-4p Daylight Diamonds 4p-6p Christmas Special Dinner	13 10:45a Fit for the Aging 1p Pantry Bingo
16 9:00a-4:30p Foot Clinic –Appt. Required 10a Silver Sneakers 12:30p Christmas Karaoke with Alice 1-4p Chess Club 2-3p Diamond Art Club	17 9a Zumba Gold 10a Zumba Gold 11:30a Birthday Lunch 12:30p Euchre 1:00p Jeopardy 4:30p COA Board Meeting	18 10a Silver Sneakers 11a New to Medicare 11a Alzheimer’s Support @ the Brook 11a BP Check 12:30p Mahjong 12:30p Chair Yoga	19 9a Zumba Gold 10a Zumba Gold 1p Penny Bingo 3p-4p Daylight Diamonds 1-5p Legal Assistance Appt. Required	20 10:45a Fit for the Aging 1p Pantry Bingo
23 10a Silver Sneakers 11:30a Christmas Sing-Along with Sarah Smaling 1-4p Chess Club 2-3p Diamond Art Club	24 CLOSED! MERRY CHRISTMAS 	25 CLOSED! MERRY CHRISTMAS 	26 9a Zumba Gold 10a Zumba Gold 1p Penny Bingo <u>3p-4p Daylight Diamonds</u> <u>Cancelled</u> 2p Commodities	27 <u>10:45a Fit for the Aging</u> <u>Cancelled</u> 1p Pantry Bingo
30 10a Silver Sneakers 12:15a Noon Years Eve Party 1-4p Chess Club 2-3p Diamond Art Club	31 CLOSED! HAPPY NEW YEAR! 			

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

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.



Matter of Balance Program: offers practical strategies to reduce falls and increase safety.

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: proper form, increasing strength, flexibility, range of motion, balance, mobility, gait, and more! 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 October 2024!
Commission on Aging & Senior Center

At the Senior Center

- We served **928** Congregate Meals

In-Home Services

- Delivered **4,721** home delivered meals.
- Provided **132.25** hours of respite care.
- We provided **323** hours of homemaker services.
- We provided **50** 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

December 12, 2024: Introduction to Tai Chi

December 13, 2024: Caregiving During the Holidays

January 9, 2025: Protect Yourself from Scams and Fraud

February 13, 2025: Home Safety and Radon
Dementia Caregiver Series (Virtual): December 2, 9, and 16, 2024, from 2:00pm-3:30pm

Diabetes PATH (Virtual): February 4, 2025-March 11, 2024, from 1:30pm-3:30pm

Matter of Balance (Virtual): January 15, 2025-March 5, 2025, from 1:00pm-3:00pm
Powerful Tools for

Powerful Tools for Caregivers (Virtual): February 3, 2025-March 10, 2025, from 1:00pm-3:00pm

Contact

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

Bingocize

Mondays and Tuesdays

starting January 6th

2:30 pm—3:30 pm

Alice Lee and Sherry Haag will be co-instructing this brand new exercise program. It combines light exercise with everyone's favorite game— BINGO! Call 989-348-7123 for more information and to sign up for the class.

Cooking Matters

January 16th—February 27th, 2025

1:00 pm—3:00 pm

Michigan State University Extension Office will be hosting Cooking Matters on Thursdays over the course of 6 weeks. Learn important tips for cooking, healthy recipes, and more. This class requires a minimum of 6 participants. Please call 989-348-7123 for more information on how to register.

Water Aerobics

Winter 2025

Back by popular demand, Water Aerobics will be returning in early winter 2025. Taught by fitness instructor Samantha Szydzik, the class will be held weekly at the brand newly

renovated and rebranded Ramada Inn in Grayling. Keep an eye out for more information in January 2025 for details on classes, times, and how you can get signed up to participate.



Winter Walking at Kirtland

Get ready to sleigh your winter fitness goals at Kirtland Community College's indoor walking sessions! The COA is interested in hosting a weekly walking group at Kirtland on Friday mornings from 10 am - 11 am. For just five bucks, you can enjoy a day of strolling, or wrap up the savings with a punch card: 11 walks for \$50.00. The walking group will begin on January 10th and continue through March. Dates and times subject to change due to holidays and school closure.

Crawford County Commission on Aging 2025 Special Dinners Schedule

Chinese New Year Special Dinner

January 9th

Mardi Gras Special Dinner

February 13th

St Patrick's Day Special Dinner

March 13th

Springtime Serenade Special Dinner

April 10th

Mother's Day Special Dinner

May 8th

Father's Day Special Dinner

June 12th

Hawaiian Luau Special Dinner

July 10th

Hog Roast Special Dinner

August 14th

Southern Comfort Special Dinner

September 11th

Harvest Special Dinner

October 9th

Thanksgiving Special Dinner

November 13th

Christmas Special Dinner

December 11th

Dinners are \$8.00 for those under 60, and are a recommended donation of \$4.00 for those over 60. All meals are 4:00 pm—6:00 pm. Meals are open to the public! Bring family and friends.

Crawford County Commission on Aging 2025 Holiday Parties Schedule

February 6th

Palentines Day Party

April 1st

April Fool's Party

June 19th

Summer Solstice Party

July 3rd

Fourth of July Party

September 8th

Grandparents Day Party

October 31st

Halloween Party

November 20th

Friendsgiving Party

December 30th

Noon-Years Eve

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

The River Road Band

February 27th, 2025, 5:30 pm

Tickets are \$20 / \$25 out of county

Stay tuned for the full schedule of concerts coming in January's Senior Gazette.

December Volunteer Spotlight: Brad Summers



Brad Summers, originally from Westland, Michigan, has been a dedicated volunteer with the Commission on Aging, continuing his longstanding tradition of

community involvement. Brad and his wife, Barb, have been active members of the Grayling community since moving here from Livonia, Michigan, in 1998.

Originally, they planned to buy a cabin in Grayling but were convinced by friends to settle here full-time. Soon after, they moved their business, Summers Dealer Services, to the area, which they successfully ran together for 35 years.

In retirement, Brad continues to give back, spending much of his time volunteering with the Grayling Rotary and the AuSable Valley Animal Shelter. Over the years, he has served on various boards, including the FIA and Grayling Recreation Authority, and dedicated eight years to volunteering with the Cub Scouts. Brad was also a Cub Scout Cubmaster for Pack 3993, he followed on all the way through to Boy Scouts and then Eagle Scouts. Brad also enjoys putting his handyman skills to work, helping with repairs at the Artisan Village and the animal shelter. He describes himself as a "Jack of All Trades" and takes pride in being able to help others.

Brad's inspiration to join the Commission on Aging came from his grandfather, who

volunteered as a Meals on Wheels driver while teaching in Illinois during the 1980s. He also took inspiration from his grandmother. When she lived on her own, her Meals on Wheels Driver was often her only contact during the day. Brad felt that volunteering with Meals on Wheels was a meaningful way to honor their legacy and give back to his own community. Humble about his contributions, Brad says he's "not one to toot my own horn," but simply enjoys helping people. His biggest passion is



family, particularly his wife Barb and their sons, Troy and Tyler. And, of course, he has a soft spot for their two Labrador retrievers, Oreo and Daisy, who love going for rides in his side-by-side.

"When I'm not busy or volunteering, I take them for rides, and they get such a kick out of it," he adds. Aside from volunteering and spending time with his family, Brad enjoys camping and sporting activities. Brad also enjoys working on his restoration of a 1962 Ford Sunliner Convertible, and working in his wood shop. Brad lives by the motto, "Live every day the best you can, and if I can assist in helping anyone, I'll be happy to do it."

We thank Brad Summers for all he has done as a Commission on Aging volunteer. Volunteers like Brad are essential to the Meals on Wheels program.

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

Upcoming Online Classes - MSU Ext.

Wits Workout - Bright Ideas

December 2, 2024 1:00PM – 1:30PM
Online

ONLINE: Stress Less with Mindfulness Fast Track Dec 2024 Series

December 3, 2024 11:30AM – 12:30PM
Tuesday and Thursday Online

Make a Spending Plan Work for You! (Webinar) - December 3, 2024

**December 3, 2024 12:00PM – 1:00PM
Zoom**

Michigan Cottage Food Law Dec. 5 2024

December 5, 2024 10:00AM – 12:00PM
Zoom Webinar

Thriving on a Fixed Income! (Webinar) - December 6, 2024

December 6, 2024 12:00PM – 1:00PM
Zoom

Informed Renter - December 9, 2024

December 9, 2024 3:00PM – 4:00PM
Virtual

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

Tammy's Tips

With winter around the corner, it is a good time to make sure your generators are in good working order and you have fresh fuel to run them. Do a test run to assure that they are in working order and will work during a power outage.

Make sure the snowblower is ready to go as well. That includes fresh gas, new spark plug and fresh oil change and proper amount of air in the tires.

With many people heating with wood, it is also a good time to check your smoke detectors and make sure that they have fresh batteries.



Gifts of Supplies

We happily accept these donations too:
All types of paper (copy, cardstock, craft)
Amazon Wish List:
https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/EEZI6ZZ0HXKH/ref=hz_ls_biz_ex

Free Medical Equipment/Supplies

The Crawford County Commission on Aging has these items available for free. If you are interested in any of these items, please contact Kathy Meisner at 989-348-7123 or stop by the Senior Center.

CORNELL AGENCY INSURANCE
"For All Your Insurance Needs"
989-348-6761
cornellinsurance.com
201 Huron St. | Grayling, MI
LET'S GO VIKINGS

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.

AuSable Family Dental, P.C.
Ralph Oppermann D.D.S.
Jennifer Malicowski, D.D.S.
800 E. Michigan Ave., Grayling, MI
(989) 344-2525 • Fax (989) 348-9629

Your Words Matter to Us!

Results from our 2024 satisfaction surveys.



Home Delivered Meal Program Survey Results

How would you rate the appearance of meals?
67% rate them as excellent.
 How would you rate the overall quality of home delivered meals? **59% of survey takers reported a rating of excellent.**
 How well do the meals meet your needs?
79% reported that our meals fully met their needs.
 The Home Delivered Meal Volunteers Makes me feel Less Lonely
61% of survey takers strongly agreed.

In-Home Satisfaction Survey

How would you rate the overall quality of your service?
78% rated the services as excellent.
 How well do our services meet your needs?
We were rated at 100% for all needs being met.
 Did the staff person who called you involve you in making decisions about your care?
We were rated at 100% client validation.
 How would you rate COA staff treating you in a positive and professional manner?
89% of survey takers rated excellent.

Congregate Meal Survey Results

How would you rate the appearance of meals?
93% rated the appearance of meals as excellent.
 How would you rate the taste of the meals?
80% rated the taste of the meals as excellent.
 How would you rate the overall quality of the meals served at the Senior Center?
87% rated the quality of meals as excellent.
 How would you rate the cleanliness of the dining room?
100% of the survey takers rated the cleanliness as excellent.

Other Important Results

How did you hear about us?
Gazette and Friends
 How do you prefer to be contacted?
41% of survey takers preferred a phone call, 55% preferred to be reached by mail, and 59% preferred to be texted.
 How likely are you to recommend us to a friend?
87% of survey takers are likely to recommend the COA to a friend.
 The overall satisfaction of the In Home Services, Home Delivered Meals, and Congregate Meals Programs is 75%.

CRAWFORD COUNTY LIBRARY

News

- Join exciting Dungeons and Dragons sessions at the Devereaux Memorial Library, Thursdays at 4:00 p.m. For teens and young adults.
 - This December, story hour for our littlest readers will feature stories themed around the holidays. Join us every Wednesday at 11AM for stories and matching crafts!
 - Highschool-Meetup, a casual space just for high-schoolers, is every other Friday from 3PM to 4:30PM.
 - Wildlife Explorers, an educational animal program for elementary-aged children, is December 10th from 3:30PM to 4:30PM.
 - Lego Club, open to ages 7 and up, is every other Wednesday from 3:30PM to 5PM.
 - Genealogy (Mondays 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.)
 - Let's Get Fit (Tuesdays and Thursday at 10:00 a.m.)
 - Sit-N-Knit (Thursday's at 10:00 a.m.)
 - Book Club (last Wednesday of each month at 1:00 p.m.)
 - Music and Movement will continue this December, but with a twist. In addition to our weekly sessions in Devereaux and Frederic, video sessions of Music and Movement will be available online for use anytime and anywhere.
- For further details and availability please call (989) 348-9214. Devereaux Memorial Library is located at 201 Plum St. Grayling. The Frederic Community Library is located at 6470 Manistee St, Frederic. Call (989) 348-9214 or email us at ccl@crawfordcolibrary.org for more information.

— Food Resources — Crawford County Residents

Crawford County Community Christian Help Center—Food Pantry
Mon, Wed & Fridays—11am - 3pm
 for anyone living in Crawford County

Christian Help Center Food Truck
 December 12th at the Beaver Creek Fire Department

Important Notice:

Mount Hope will not have food trucks again until June 2025, thank you for attending.

Thompson  Treusch
 Law Office PLC

Specializing in General Practice
 Business Law – Real Estate – Family Law.

989-745-6625



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Independent, Assisted
 & Memory Care Living



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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

December Word Search Puzzle

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

ANGEL
 BELLS
 CHRISTMAS
 BOW
 CAROL
 CHEER
 CLAUS
 COZY
 ELVES
 FEAST
 FROST
 GIFTS
 GLORY
 HOLLY
 ICICLE
 JOLLY
 JOY
 LIGHTS
 MAGIC
 MIRTH
 NOEL
 NORTH
 PEACE
 PINE
 POLAR
 PRANCE
 REINS
 SANTA
 SCARF
 SNOW
 SOCKS
 STAR
 STOCK
 SWEEP
 TINSEL
 TOAST
 TOYS
 TREAT
 TRIM
 WISH
 WHITE
 WREATH
 YULE
 CANDY
 GIFT
 GOOSE
 MERRY
 WARM
 TREE
 SLEIGH

Kate's Kitchen Corner



Cranberry sauce might be more traditional for turkey, but it also tastes great with pork and ham. Let me know if you give it a try, and I hope you have a very Merry Christmas! The original recipe can be found at: Natashaskitchen.com

- 2/3 cup honey
- 1/4 cup water
- 1/4 cup orange juice, freshly squeezed from 1 large orange
- 1 tsp orange zest, lightly packed, from the same orange
- 1 cinnamon stick (optional)
- 12 oz cranberries, fresh or frozen

Instructions

1. In a medium saucepan, combine 2/3 cup honey, 1/4 cup water, 1/4 cup orange juice, 1 tsp orange zest and 1 cinnamon stick. Bring to a simmer over medium heat, stirring to dissolve honey.
2. Add 12 oz cranberries and bring to a boil. Once boiling, adjust heat to keep at a low boil and cook 10 minutes uncovered, stirring occasionally. Cranberries will burst and sauce will begin to thicken. A minute or so before turning off the heat, taste for sweetness and add more honey to taste for a sweeter sauce. Keep in mind the sauce will thicken when it cools.
3. Remove from heat, discard cinnamon stick and cool cranberry sauce to room temperature then refrigerate until ready to serve.

Notes:

- First, zest your orange, then juice it.
- You can substitute maple syrup, brown or white sugars, or an alternate sweetener like Stevia or Monk fruit for the honey.
- If you are using frozen cranberries it will take longer than 10 minutes for the berries to burst and the sauce to thicken
- You can use a pinch of cinnamon in place of the stick or leave it out altogether. I prefer mine without.
- Adding a small pinch of salt with the sweetener brings out the fresh flavors of the fruit but if you are watching your sodium, don't worry about it, it will still be delicious.

Grayling Save a lot

Coburn Farms Butter \$2.49

Limit 2 with Coupon

Good thru: 12/31/2024

Salted or Unsalted Butter

PLEASE DO NOT DUPLICATE

COA Wish List

If you are interested in donating any of these items from the COA's wish list, please call 989-348-7123.

From Gordon Food Service

- 513881– Granulated Garlic
- 126993– Onion Powder
- 605062– Taco Seasoning
- 132675– Bleach
- 629640– White Vinegar
- 225061– Black Pepper
- 285684– Steel Wool

No Specific Brand Required

- Boxes of Powder Free Latex Gloves-Medium
- Alcohol Wipes
- Cornstarch
- White & Brown Sugar



Stay in the Know!

Sign up for **FREE** e-mail news about our activities.

Call: **(989) 348-7123**

The Senior Center respects your privacy and does not sell or make available to others. contact information.

VETERAN TOWN HALL & PACT ACT RESOURCE FAIR

VFW Post 151B
1200 Gornick Ave
Gaylord, MI 49735

**DECEMBER 11, 2024
6:00 P.M. - 8:00 P.M.**

JOIN US:

- PACT Act presentation
- Hear from and speak to VA leaders
- Enroll in VA health care
- Learn about Toxic Exposure claims and other benefit information
- Claim Assistance
- On-site Toxic Exposure Screening
- VET Center Resources
- Light refreshments provided

WE HEARD YOUR REQUESTS

We want to bring the following classes to the Commission on Aging:

- Beginner Clogging
- Snowshoeing
- Cross Country Skiing
- Aerobic Drumming

If you have taught and are certified in these classes, and would be interested in volunteering, please call 989-348-7123 today to get started.

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.

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DFC
CHIROPRACTIC

6838 M 93 HWY S
Grayling, MI
P: (989) 348-6600
F: (989) 348-3537

Robert Boykin, D.C.
rboykindc@gmail.com

Veteran's Coffee Hour

Thursday, December 12th
10:00-11:00 AM

American Legion Post #106
info: (989) 344-3861

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CONTACT US

PHONE NUMBER:
989.358.4616

WEBSITE:
www.nemcsa.org

New to
 **Medicare**
Seminar

Are you turning age 65 in 2024? 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, December 18th, 2024 @ 11:00 AM** for a presentation that will help demystify the issues surrounding Medicare.

Board Member and MMAP volunteer, Sandy Woods, 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 at advocacy@crawfordcoa.org or call (989) 348-7123.

Prescription Medication Abuse

Provided by Tammy Findlay

Creating or using forged prescriptions is a crime, and prescription fraud comes at an enormous cost to physicians, hospitals, insurers, and taxpayers. But the greatest cost is a human one—tens of thousands of lives are lost to addiction each year. Protect yourself and your loved ones by following this guidance:

- If you are taking opioids, take them exactly as prescribed by your doctor, ideally, for the shortest amount of time possible.
- Never share your medication with others.
- Explore non-opioid options with your doctor.

Learn more about the risks of opioid use from the [CDC](https://www.cdc.gov).

If you have unused or expired pain medications, take them to a [DEA-approved take back site](https://www.dea.gov) for disposal.

Redeem this card for a
“Buy One Get One Free”

SPIKE BURGER
(DINE-IN ONLY)

Coupon Expires December 31st, 2024
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NorthernPinesAssistedLiving.org
 130 Mary Ann Street · Grayling 49738
 p: (989)344-2010 · f: (989) 344-2011

**WANTED:
 MEALS ON WHEELS DRIVERS**

Join our team and bring food to people in need!

IF YOU LIKE TO DRIVE, HAVE AVAILABILITY DURING THE WEEK DAYS AND WANT TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE, WE COULD USE YOUR HELP!

**COA Welcomes
 Farmer's Market**

The Famer's Market will continue this winter at the Commission on Aging and Senior Center. The COA is excited to help expand the Farmer's Market's reach, and offer it a home indoors for the winter months. The Farmers Markets will take place on one Saturday each month. There will be farm fresh products, baked goods, wool mittens, wood items, and so much more. The events will be on December 14th, January 18th, February 15th, March 15th, and April 19th, from 10:00 am—4:00 pm.

**Viking Athletes Help Beautify
 Commission on Aging**



On Monday, October 21st, 23 student-athletes from Grayling High School descended upon the Commission on Aging to mulch the newly planted memorial trees, and place stone beneath the COA's Energy Recovery Unit. The student athletes pictured above participate in Grayling High School's Football Program.

Pictured above is Corbin Allen, Cameron Baker, Nate Barlick, Danny Bonamie,

Carson Bracken, Spencer Brado, Gavin Cvitkovich, Dominik Demeere, Brandt Finstrom, Noah Gabriel, Vaughn Gaertner, Isaac Garrett, Nick Ginther, Damon Green, Daniel Hunter, Myles Mead, Brox Muscott, Wyatt Nelson, Austin Schwartz, Ryan Stade, Braiden Tuck, Xavier White, and Zeke Wright. These young men, led by their coaches and mentors, are a great example of what kids their age should aspire to be, and the Commission on Aging greatly thanks them for their time, dedication, and hard work.

Maintenance staff member, Todd Lako states “These kids did a phenomenal job. We couldn't have made this happen without them.” The COA is grateful for their hard work.

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