

# Crawford County *Senior Gazette* December 2025

*Sorenson  
Lockwood*  
FUNERAL  
HOME  
(989) 348-2951

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## Return to the North Pole: The Magic Behind the Workshop

by Toby Neal

When I received the snow-covered envelope in the mailbox - sealed with a peppermint-striped wax stamp and faintly smelling of gingerbread. I couldn't resist opening it right away! It read:



*Dear Toby,  
Santa and Mrs. Claus are away on a short sleighcation. But the elves would love to show you around.  
Signed,  
Brian Oakensleigh Merrywick,  
Workshop Director – North Pole*

And so, with a mug of cocoa in one hand and a plane ticket (that somehow transformed into a reindeer-shaped boarding pass) in the other, I set out again for the North Pole.

When I arrived, the workshop was even busier than I remembered. Bells jingled, snowflakes danced like confetti, and elves zipped around with armfuls of toys, ribbons, and cookie trays. It was cheerful chaos - a symphony of clatter, laughter, and the occasional shout of "Incoming tinsel!" Waiting at the entrance, clipboard in mittened hand, was Brian Oakensleigh Merrywick, the North Pole's Workshop Director. His coat was trimmed in evergreen green with tiny bells that jingled when he laughed. He adjusted his spectacles and greeted me with a bow that bent his hat clean in half and said, "Welcome back, Mr. Neal! Santa said you were good at noticing the magic behind the magic. Let's show you how it really works!"

And so began my tour, not of reindeer or sleighs, but of the heart of Christmas: the elves who make it all happen. Our first stop was the kitchen, where the air smelled of cinnamon and happiness.

**Continued on Page 11**

## Hours of Operation

Monday - Friday  
8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.  
4388 W. M-72 Hwy  
Grayling, MI, 49738  
www.crawfordcoa.org  
Find us on Facebook!



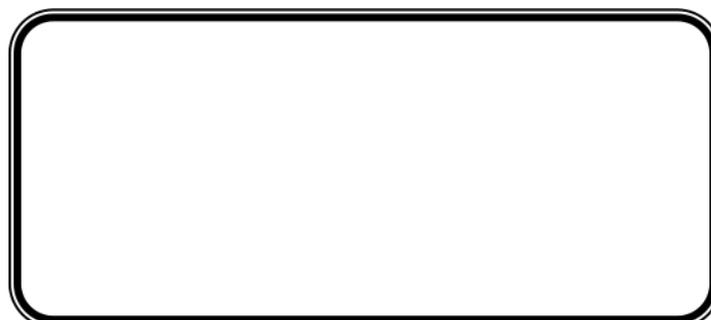
## Find Us By Searching

Crawford County  
Commission on Aging  
& Senior Center



## 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.

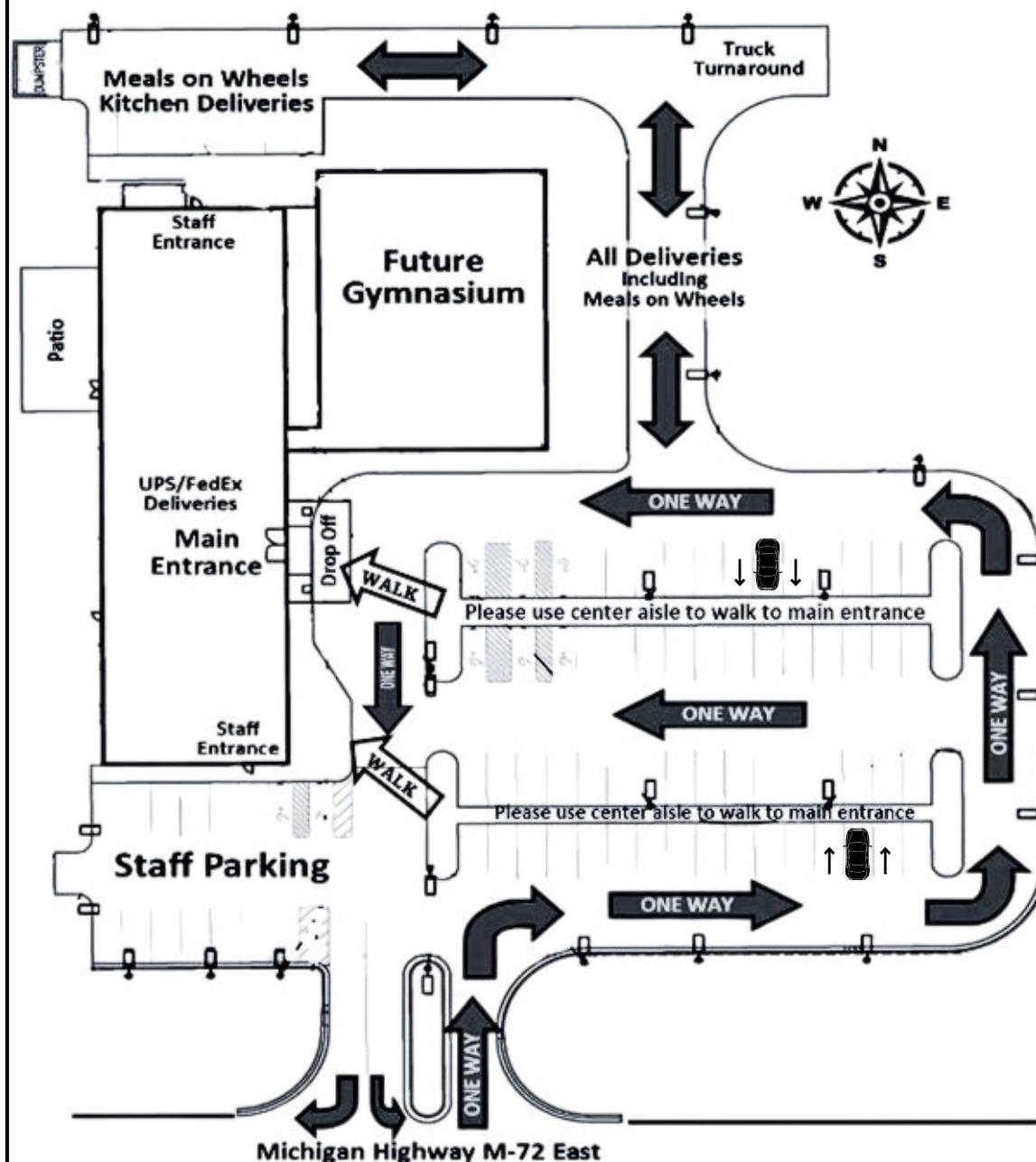


director@crawfordcoa.org  
Fax: (989) 348-8342  
Phone: (989) 348-7123  
Grayling, MI 49738  
4388 West M-72 Hwy

Smartphone Scan  
to our Website



## Parking and Deliveries



## Winter Safety Tips

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.

## COA Wishlist 2025

This Christmas, the COA is asking for donations of the following items:

- Dial-A-Ride Bus Tickets
- Gas Cards
- Save-A-Lot Cards
- Family Fare Cards
- Gordon Food Service Cards
- Tissues (Kleenex)
- Copy Paper (8.5 x 11)
- Cases of Water
- Lysol Wipes
- Lysol Disinfectant Spray
- Purell Hand Sanitizer Bottles
- Medium Nitrile Gloves
- COA Congregate Meal Coupons



## Medical Loan Closet Spotlight

The Crawford County Commission on Aging has a surplus of wheelchairs available for loan, including regular and flyweight wheelchairs

Both wheelchairs have a 300lbs weight capacity. The upholstery is durable, lightweight, attractive, and easy to clean. They have padded armrests, Push-to-lock wheel locks, Swing-away footrests as well as easy folding for storage.

The flyweight weighs 19lbs for easy travel while the regular wheelchair is a sturdy 38lbs. If you are interested in loaning out a wheelchair, please contact Sarah Pollock or Kathy Meisner at 989-348-7123.



## Region 9 Area Agency on Aging Webinars for December 2025

### Oral Health for Older Adults

- Thursday, December 11<sup>th</sup>
- 1:00 pm - 2:00 pm
- Guest Speaker: Elisa Dack, Community Health Director for District Health Department #2.
- The Webinar will review dental conditions associated with aging and will discuss ways to keep your mouth healthy as you age.
- Call 989-358-4667 for more information.

### How to Cope with a Lack of Sleep:

- Friday, December 12<sup>th</sup>
- 1:00 pm - 2:00 pm
- Guest Speaker: Elizabeth Williams of MSU Extension
- Call 989-358-4667 for more information.

### Dementia Friendly Environments

- Friday, January 9<sup>th</sup>, 2026
- 1:00 pm - 2:00 pm
- Guest Speaker: Olivia Thomas of the Alzheimer's Foundation of America
- Will review the impact of environments on someone with dementia.
- Call 989-358-4667 for more information.



## Coming Attractions: Save the Dates



### Veteran's Coffee Hour Date

Date: Thursday, December 11<sup>th</sup>

Time: 10:00-11:00 AM

At the American Legion Post #106

More Info: (989) 344-3861



## Alzheimer's Support Group 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of the Month at the Brook of Grayling

Caring for someone with Alzheimer's can be both rewarding and overwhelming. As the disease progresses, caregivers often face emotional strain, exhaustion, and isolation. Having a strong support system can make all the difference. Support provides encouragement, practical help, and a reminder that caregivers are not alone. When caregivers care for themselves, they're better able to provide patient, loving care to their loved one. Supporting the caregiver is truly another way of supporting the person with Alzheimer's. Come join the COA's support group every 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of the month.

## Special Dinner Schedule 2026

**January 15<sup>th</sup>**

Winter Picnic

**February 19<sup>th</sup>**

Chinese New Year

**March 19<sup>th</sup>**

St. Patrick's Day

**April 16<sup>th</sup>**

Spring Serenade

**May 14<sup>th</sup>**

Mother's Day

**June 18<sup>th</sup>**

Father's Day

**July 16<sup>th</sup>**

Hawaiian Luau

**August 20<sup>th</sup>**

Backyard BBQ

**September 17<sup>th</sup>**

Thursday Night Lights

**October 22<sup>nd</sup>**

Halloween

**November 19<sup>th</sup>**

Thanksgiving

**December 17<sup>th</sup>**

Christmas

## COA Holiday & Party Schedule



December 30<sup>th</sup>, 2025

Noon-Years Eve

February 12<sup>th</sup>, 2026 Valentine's Day

May 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2026

Memorial Day

June 19<sup>th</sup>, 2026

Juneteenth Celebration

## Secretary of State Mobile Office

The next visit is scheduled for December 22<sup>nd</sup> from 10:30 am - 3:00 pm.

To schedule an appointment, please call 989-348-7123. For pricing information, please contact your local Secretary of State for updated information.

Services include, but are not limited to, license renewal, plate renewal, handicap placard renewal and more.

## Grayling Pharmacy Bingo

The First Thursday of the Month Following Penny.

Bingo!

Everyone is invited to play Grayling Pharmacy Bingo. Play FREE to win Grayling Pharmacy Coupons. These coupons can be used to make purchases at the Grayling Pharmacy.



## Versiti Blood Drive

Next scheduled drive is **Monday, December 8<sup>th</sup>**  
All blood drives run from 11:00 am—3:30 pm.

Donating blood is vital because small hospitals often have limited supplies and rely on donations. Each donation helps ensure that patients in our community.

Visit

[https://donateblood.versiti.org/donor/schedules/drive\\_schedule/11620222](https://donateblood.versiti.org/donor/schedules/drive_schedule/11620222) to register.



## 2026 Trip Survey

The Commission on Aging is collecting survey information to determine a schedule for trips in 2026. To fill out the survey, please either visit this link:

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScNAf08Lm-S06\\_A8yd2uacoebcoCaua62hUFxcBsVTe3za8Vg/viewform?usp=header](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScNAf08Lm-S06_A8yd2uacoebcoCaua62hUFxcBsVTe3za8Vg/viewform?usp=header)

or scan the QR code below using your smartphone. To scan the QR code, simply open your camera, hold the camera over the QR code, and then click on the link that appears on your screen. Thank you for helping us decide on trips for 2026.





# 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](http://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 your consideration.

## Sponsors

### Silver Sneakers

Led by Rich Ferrigan  
of Grayling Fitness Center

### Foot Clinic

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

### Grayling Pharmacy Bingo

by The Grayling Pharmacy

### Fit for the Aging

by Sami Szydzik of Stronger  
Fitness

### Housing Counseling

by Laurie Jamison

## General Donations

Ann & Dale Bale

Greg Faust

Janet Gildner

Jill Grey

Sherry Haag

Sandi Hasson

Ernie Johnson

Alice Lee

Kirsten Lietz

Judy Marchlewicz

Michigan Masonic

Charitable Fund

Cheryl Millikin

Helen Nolan

Carolyn Osborne

Keith Radwanski

Susan Smith

Betty Sorrels

Jackie Urcheck

Randy and Tanya

Stephens

Tracy Wilson

Ron & Margaret

Yon

## Thank You, Donors

## Hometown Heroes

**\$300.00 per day supports a day of Meals  
on Wheels**

**Running Tally of Support:**

**71 Days, \$21,890.00**

**Thank You!**

Become a Hometown Hero by donating a day's worth of meals for local Meals on Wheels recipients! Call 989-348-7123 to find out more!

## 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 that 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 Exercise Lobby. If you are interested in donating in memory of someone, call 989-348-7123 for more information.

## Memorial Donations

Celebrate your loved one's legacy with a memorial donation that provides care and comfort to older adults in our community—just as Randy & Tanya Stephens (in memory of Mel Moore), Farrell Thomas (in memory of Linda Brooks Thomas), Mickie & Denis Meyers (in memory of Barbara Pritchard), and Mary Delmar Krueger, Scott & Mandy Steele, and Jean Mancini (each in memory of Joan Mattis) have done. Call 989-348-7123 for more information on Memorial Donations.

## 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 o Cash o 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.

## Paws for a Cause Donation Drive

The COA's Paws for a Cause donation drive runs from December 3<sup>rd</sup> to the 17th, and your support helps seniors keep their beloved pets healthy and by their side. The Meals on Wheels Pet Program provides vital preventive and emergency care, including vaccines, nail trims, dental care, medication, and more. All donations, no matter the amount, earn you a paw print with your name displayed in the Senior Center, showing that you're part of this heart-warming mission. Make a meaningful impact this season by becoming a Paws for a Cause supporter. Thank you for your support!

## December Birthdays

Clara Gibbs 12/3  
Ann Corbin 12/6  
Roxie Chumack 12/9  
Veronica Terrell 12/10  
Jackie Gerhardi 12/11  
Richard Persing 12/15  
Loren Crampton 12/21  
Marilyn Hawkins 12/26  
Janet Gooch 12/31

Birthday Lunch is on Thursday, December 18<sup>th</sup>, 11:30 am - 12:30 pm  
Want your birthday in the Senior Gazette? Stop by Reception to fill out the form to allow us to share.

## These December Activities will Keep you Jolly and Bright



### Gaylord Community Orchestra Performance

**December 3<sup>rd</sup>, 5:30 pm - 7:00 pm**

Back by popular demand, members of the Gaylord Community Orchestra will be at the Senior Center to perform a special Christmas concert. Tickets are by donation only.

### Christmas Origami Class

**December 8<sup>th</sup>, 10:00 am - 11:30 am**

This class will be your chance to learn the skill of origami. This class will teach you how to build your very own origami Christmas star. Class size is limited, please call ahead to register for this fun class.

### Christmas Karaoke

**December 10<sup>th</sup>, 12:45 pm**

Get into the Christmas spirit by coming out to the Senior Center after lunch on December 10<sup>th</sup>. Everyone is invited to come out and sing during this special karaoke event.

### Free Ornament Making Class

**December 15<sup>th</sup> & 18<sup>th</sup>, 12:30 pm**

Lisa Pamame will be at the Senior Center on December 15<sup>th</sup> to lead a class on building your own clay-based Christmas ornaments. The class is split into two classes. The class size is limited; please call 989-348-7123 to pre-register.

### Dial-A-Ride Christmas Lights Tour

**December 16<sup>th</sup>, 5:00 pm - 6:00 pm**

Come out and see the lights around town on this special tour. The tour is by donation only. There are only 20 seats available. Please call the COA at 989-348-7123 to book your seat.

### Noon-Years Eve

**December 30<sup>th</sup>, 12:00 pm**

Join us for a fun end-of-the-year lunch. In addition to regular lunch, we will be serving sparkling grape juice, cookies, and recapping another great year at the COA.

## Volunteers

Mark Anderson	Tim & Olie Miller
Meredith Anderson	Toby Neal
Nancy Billinghamst	Mark & Susan
Ben & Pam Carr	Ostahowski
Debbie Carrigan	Ron Pagerski
Carolyn Diponio	Lois Platt
Kathy Dreffs	Jackson Pollock
Donna Farren	Keith Radwanski
Dave Felker	Al Reynolds
Richard Ferrigan	Chuck & Robin
Linda Fieldhauer	Rodgers
Bob Gerring	Jon & Gail Schultz
Sherry Haag	Jon Shazri
Sharron Hagerman	Richard Smith
Donn Handy	Janis Smith
Susan Hensler	Randy & Tanya
Cheryl Hopp	Stephens
Annette Hritz	Dave Stephenson
Donna Hubbard	Brad Summers
Francis Hummel	Tim & Susie
Liedewey Hunter	Swedine
Cindy Johnson	Sammy Sydzyk
Michael Jordan	Farrel Thomas
John Kay	Ellen Thompson
Ron & Eileen Kemerer	Scott Ulrey
Glenn King	Becky Walrath
Lorelei King	Zoella Wethington
Alice Lee	Carol Wilder
Nancy Lemmen	Curtis Williams
Cathy Lester	Ernie & Ruthann
Kristen Lietz	Windolph
Sandy Marshall	Sandra Woods
Rick McBride	
Dan & Karen McCarthy	
Max Meisner	
Mike Miller	

## Important Holiday Information

- Zumba Gold is cancelled for the Holidays on December 23<sup>rd</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup>, 30<sup>th</sup>, and 1<sup>st</sup>.
- Silver Sneakers is cancelled for the Holidays on December 22<sup>nd</sup>, 24<sup>th</sup>, 29<sup>th</sup>, and 31<sup>st</sup>.
- Fit for the Aging is cancelled for the Holidays on December 19<sup>th</sup>, 26<sup>th</sup>, and January 2<sup>nd</sup>.
- Cardio Drumming is cancelled for December 23<sup>rd</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>.
- The COA is closed December 24<sup>th</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup>, 31<sup>st</sup> and January 1<sup>st</sup>.



**The Brook**  
Retirement Communities  
Big Rapids · Boyne City · Cedar Springs · Cheboygan Gaylord · Gladwin · Grayling · Houghton Lake · Newaygo Portland · Rogers City · Roscommon · Standish · West Branch



## The Tammy Tracker

To prepare for December winter, prioritize safety with warm clothing, emergency car kits, and safe heating practices like keeping candles away from flammable materials. Enjoy the season by cozying up indoors with hot drinks or movies, or embracing outdoor activities like hikes with proper preparation.



### Medicare Information

Open Enrollment for Advantage Plans  
Yes, there is a Medicare Advantage Open Enrollment Period (MA OEP) that runs annually from January 1 to March 31. This period allows individuals already enrolled in a Medicare Advantage plan to make a one-time change. Please call Tammy Findlay, Crawford County Commission on Aging Advocacy/Resource Coordinator, @ 989-348-7123 for information on Advantage Plans Open Enrollment.

### Monthly Commodities

Commodities will be available for pickup on Wednesday, December 17th, between 1:00 and 3:00 p.m. If you are currently receiving commodities or plan to pick them up, please ensure that you collect your items by the end of the day on Friday, December 20th. To find out if you're eligible and to get signed up, contact Tammy Findlay at 989-348-7123.

### New to



Happy Birthday! Are you going to be 65 soon? Are you getting mail & phone calls from insurance companies? Protect yourself from Scams and Fraud! Need help understanding Medicare? Join Tammy Findlay, a certified State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) Counselor on Wednesday, December 10th at 9:00 am for a New to Medicare Presentation. Learn whether you need to enroll in Medicare at 65 if you have employer-sponsored insurance. Understand the potential risks of late enrollment and gaps in coverage.



### TAMMY'S TIPS

#### Fire Safety

- Holiday decorations can be a fun way to express creativity and get into the holiday spirit. However, some decorations can also be hazardous if not used properly.
- Turn off holiday lights at night or when you leave the house.
- Replace any string of lights with worn or broken cords or loose bulb connections.
- Keep candles at least 12 inches away from flammable materials or consider using flameless candles.
- Water your Christmas tree daily and don't let it dry out. A dry tree is more flammable.
- Make sure your tree is at least three feet away from any heat source, like fireplaces, radiators, candles, heat vents or lights, and not blocking an exit.
- Don't overload extension cords and outlets. Replace all worn, old or damaged appliance cords, and do not run cords under rugs or furniture.
- If you have children or pets, avoid decorations that are small, sharp, or breakable, or that contain toxic substances, such as mistletoe, holly berries, or artificial snow.



### TAMMY'S TIPS

Winter safety for pets involves keeping them indoors during cold weather and limiting their outdoor time to prevent issues like hypothermia and frostbite. Essential practices include protecting their paws from ice and salt, providing a warm indoor space with dry bedding, and ensuring access to fresh, unfrozen water. Additionally, check under vehicle hoods before starting the engine, as animals may seek warmth there, and ensure your pet has proper identification in case they get lost in snow.



### TAMMY'S TIPS

State Emergency Relief (SER) through the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) may help low-income households pay part of their heating or electric bills, assist in keeping utilities in service, or have service restored. Low-income customers may be eligible for other assistance through the Michigan Energy Assistance Program. Seventy percent of MEAP funds must be expended during the crisis season, but additional funding may be available after May 31st. Customers should contact their utility to see what programs are available in their area.

## The Scoop on Staying Healthy This Winter

Remember 2020 when COVID came on the scene and totally disrupted what we knew as “our normal lives”? And remember how, suddenly, we were all totally focused on washing our hands and not touching anything out in public?

Are you still practicing these two theories?

Unfortunately, many of us are not. We may or may not wash our hands before we eat, whenever we have contact with doors or stair rails used by the public, or practice not using our hands to cover our mouths when we cough or sneeze.

If you have returned to doing things “like we used to” ...you are exposing yourself to possible infections. Whether we like it or not... COVID is still with us. So is influenza, RSV and pneumonia. Even if we get our vaccines we can contract any of these illnesses. So how do we prevent them?

Our best defense against being infected by any of these illnesses is a simple task we can and **SHOULD** practice everyday. **WASH YOUR HANDS!!**

### Did you know?

#### **Handwashing equals happiness:**

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, handwashing can prevent 1 in 3 diarrhea-related illnesses and 1 in 5 infections, including the flu.

#### **The dirty secret of public restrooms:**

Research shows, on average, only 31 percent of men and 65 percent of women washed their hands after using a public restroom.

#### **Handwash your way to health:**

Using antibiotics creates antibiotic resistance. Handwashing prevents many sicknesses, so people need less antibiotics. Therefore, less antibiotic resistance.

#### **Sneezes are mini hurricanes:**

A typical human sneeze exits the body at about 200 miles per hour and emits around 40,000 droplets into the air. Do not cover your mouth and nose with your hands when you sneeze. Sneeze or cough into your elbow (shirt sleeve) or a tissue or handkerchief. It helps prevent the spread of germs

Think of how many different things we touch during the course of an average day. Now imagine how many of those things were touched by other people's hands. Yuck! Wash your hands to prevent the spread of dangerous germs.

Many respiratory illnesses increase during the winter months. Flu, COVID, RSV, and other viruses can be prevented with using basic handwashing techniques. Our Mothers weren't wrong when they stressed the importance of washing our hands.

**Use good common sense and wash your hands often everyday. It will keep you healthier in the long run.**

& that's  
**THE SCOOP**  
**ON HEALTHY LIVING**



## Upcoming Online Classes from MSU Extension- December 2025

### Mindful Moments: A Series of Mindfulness Workshops

December 1, 2025 7:00PM – 8:30PM Online

### Mindful Moments: A Series of Mindfulness Workshops

December 2, 2025 12:00PM – 1:00PM Online

### Mindful Moments: A Series of Mindfulness Workshops

December 3, 2025 12:00PM – 1:00PM Online

### Mindful Moments: A Series of Mindfulness Workshops

December 3, 2025 7:00PM – 8:00PM Online

### Thriving on a Fixed Income! (Webinar) -

December 4, 2025

December 4, 2025 10:00AM – 11:00AM Virtual - Zoom

### Mindful Moments: A Series of Mindfulness Workshops

December 6, 2025 10:00AM – 11:30AM Online

### Mindful Moments: A Series of Mindfulness Workshops

December 7, 2025 7:00PM – 8:00PM Online

### ONLINE: RELAX Alternatives to Anger Daily

Dec 2025

December 9, 2025 – December 12, 2025 Tue, Wed, Thu and Fri Online

### Make a Spending Plan Work for You! (Webinar)

- December 10, 2025

December 10, 2025 12:00PM – 1:00PM Virtual - Zoom

### Informed Renter - December 10, 2025

December 10, 2025 12:00PM – 1:00PM

Webinar on Zoom

### Top Ten Credit Tips (Webinar) - December 11, 2025

December 11, 2025 2:00PM – 3:00PM Zoom

### Mindful Moments: A Series of Mindfulness Workshops

December 14, 2025 7:00PM – 8:00PM Online

### Tips to Build and Protect Your Credit (Webinar)

- Dec 16, 2025

December 16, 2025 12:00PM – 1:00PM Zoom

**To register for any event visit:**

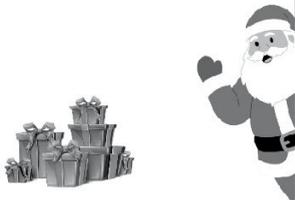
**<https://www.canr.msu.edu/rlr/> and click on**

**the Events tab**

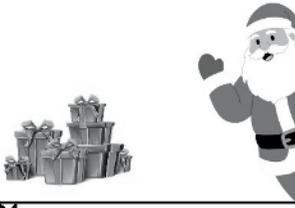


MSU EXTENSION

## December 2025 - Meal Calendar

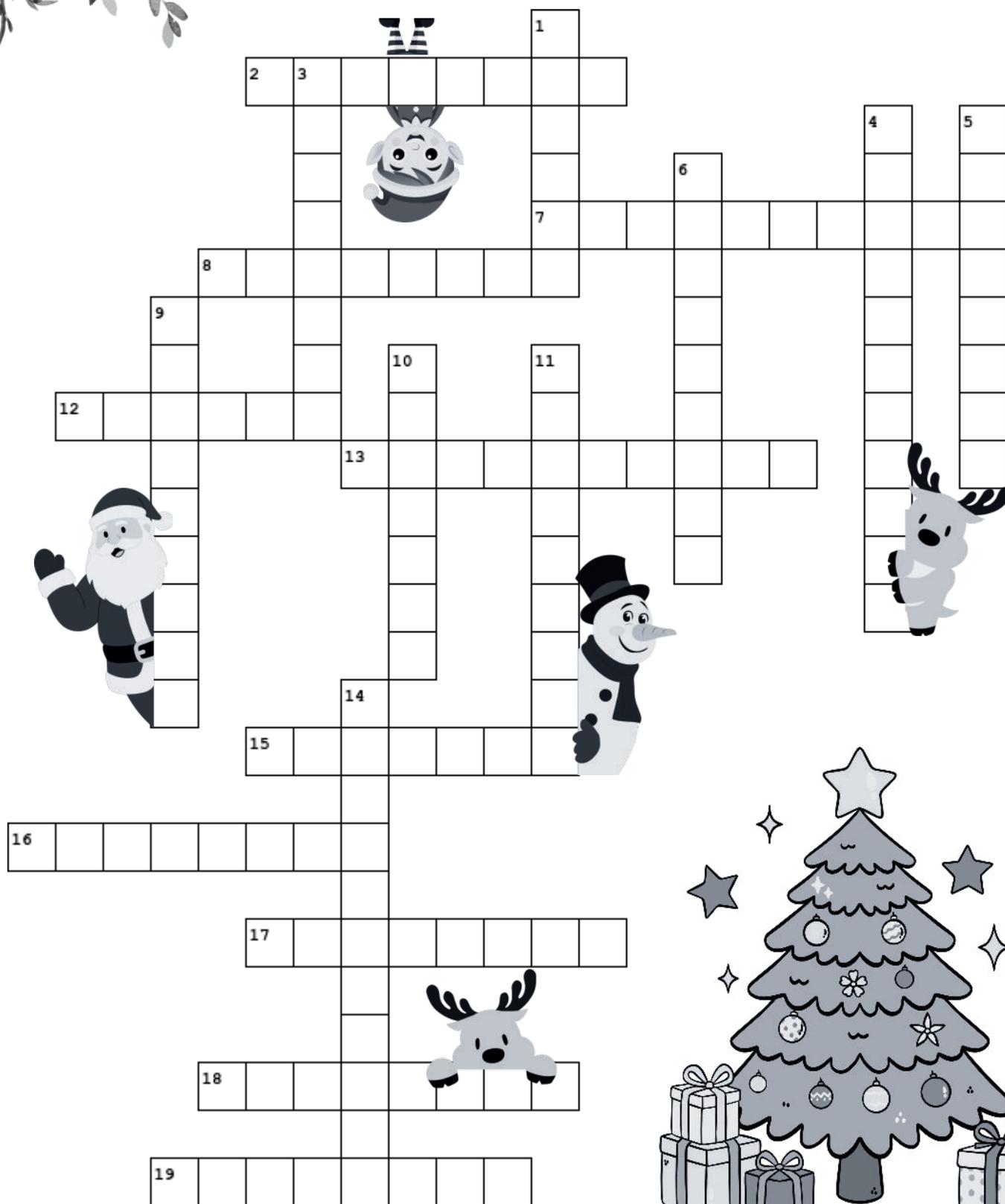
MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
<b>1</b> <b>8:30a-9:30a Breakfast</b> Biscuits and Gravy, Scrambled Eggs, Four Berries Blend, Strawberry Chia Smoothie <b>11:30a-12:30p Lunch</b> Lemon Baked Fish, Redskin Potatoes, Green Beans, Fresh Pear	<b>2</b> <b>8:30a-9:30a Breakfast</b> Fried Egg Sandwich, Oatmeal, Mango Berry Smoothie <b>11:30a-12:30p Lunch</b> Chicken & Pepper Bake, Dinner Roll, Apple	<b>3</b> <b>8:30a-9:30a Breakfast</b> Bacon & Egg Bake, Hash Browns, Assorted Bagels, Tropical Smoothie, Kiwi <b>11:30a-12:30p Lunch</b> Pork Roast, Baked Potato, Green Beans, Red Grapes	<b>4</b> <b>8:30a-9:30a Breakfast</b> Pancakes, Two Sausage Patties, Sunrise Peach Smoothie <b>11:30a-12:30p Lunch</b> Meatloaf, Mashed Potatoes with Beef Gravy, Brussels Sprouts, Apple	<b>5</b> <b>8:30a-9:30a Breakfast</b> Bacon, Fried Egg, Breakfast Potatoes, Wheat Toast, Four Berries Blend, Blueberry Chia Smoothie <b>11:30a-12:30p Lunch</b> American Goulash, Green Beans, Dinner Roll, Kiwi
<b>8</b> <b>8:30a-9:30a Breakfast</b> Biscuits and Gravy, Scrambled Eggs, Four Berries Blend, Strawberry Chia Smoothie <b>11:30a-12:30p Lunch</b> Chicken Drumsticks, Baked Beans, Prince Charles Vegetables, Banana	<b>9</b> <b>8:30a-9:30a Breakfast</b> Fried Egg Sandwich, Oatmeal, Mango, Berry Smoothie <b>11:30a-12:30p Lunch</b> Spaghetti and Meatballs, Broccoli, Breadstick, Cantaloupe & Honey Dew	<b>10</b> <b>8:30a-9:30a Breakfast</b> Bacon & Egg Bake, Hash Browns, Assorted Bagels, Tropical Smoothie, Kiwi <b>11:30a-12:30p Lunch</b> Lemon Pepper Chicken, Baked Potato, Brussels Sprouts, Orange	<b>11</b> <b>11:30a-12:30p Lunch</b> Honey Mustard Chicken Thighs, Herbes De Provence Potatoes, Peas & Onions, Pear <b>4:00p-6:00p Christmas Special Dinner</b> Glazed Spiral Ham, Mashed Potatoes & Gravy, Honey Garlic Carrots, a Dinner Roll, and Red Velvet Cake	<b>12</b> <b>8:30a-9:30a Breakfast</b> Bacon, Fried Egg, Breakfast Potatoes, Wheat Toast, Four Berries Blend, Blueberry Chia Smoothie <b>11:30a-12:30p Lunch</b> Pepper Steak, Brown Rice, Stir Fry Vegetable, Vegetable Egg Roll, Kiwi
<b>15</b> <b>8:30a-9:30a Breakfast</b> Biscuits and Gravy, Scrambled Eggs, Four Berries Blend, Strawberry Chia Smoothie <b>11:30a-12:30p Lunch</b> Chili with Beans, Broccoli & Cauliflower, Dinner Roll, Pear	<b>16</b> <b>8:30a-9:30a Breakfast</b> Fried Egg Sandwich, Oatmeal, Mango, Berry Smoothie <b>11:30a-12:30p Lunch</b> Lasagna, Mixed Vegetables, Orange	<b>17</b> <b>8:30a-9:30a Breakfast</b> Bacon & Egg Bake, Hash Browns, Assorted Bagels, Tropical Smoothie, Kiwi <b>11:30a-12:30p Lunch</b> Chicken Stir Fry, Brown Rice, Vegetable Egg Roll, Mandarin Orange	<b>18</b> <b>8:30a-9:30a Breakfast</b> Pancakes, Two Sausage Patties, Sunrise Peach Smoothie <b>11:30a-12:30p Birthday Lunch</b> Sweet & Sour Meatballs, Brown Rice, Stir Fry Vegetables, Pineapple Chunks	<b>19</b> <b>8:30a-9:30a Breakfast</b> Bacon, Fried Egg, Breakfast Potatoes, Wheat Toast, Four Berries Blend, Blueberry Chia Smoothie <b>11:30a-12:30p Lunch</b> Roast Turkey, Mashed Potatoes, Peas & Onions, Orange
<b>22 – Meal Day</b> <b>8:30a-9:30a Breakfast</b> Biscuits and Gravy, Scrambled Eggs, Four Berries Blend, Strawberry Chia Smoothie <b>11:30a-12:30p Lunch</b> BBQ Pork Sandwich, Dill & Garlic Potatoes, Carrots, Kiwi	<b>23 – Meal Day</b> <b>8:30a-9:30a Breakfast</b> Fried Egg Sandwich, Oatmeal, Mango, Berry Smoothie <b>11:30a-12:30p</b> Western Omelet, Redskin Potatoes, Broccoli & Cauliflower, Dinner Roll, Banana	<b>24</b> CLOSED FOR CHRISTMAS EVE 	<b>25</b> CLOSED FOR CHRISTMAS DAY 	<b>26</b> <b>8:30a-9:30a Breakfast</b> Bacon, Fried Egg, Breakfast Potatoes, Wheat Toast, Four Berries Blend, Blueberry Chia Smoothie <b>11:30a-12:30p Lunch</b> Sloppy Joe, Green Beans, Carrots, Four Berries Blend
<b>29</b> <b>8:30a-9:30a Breakfast</b> Biscuits and Gravy, Scrambled Eggs, Four Berries Blend, Strawberry Chia Smoothie <b>11:30a-12:30p Lunch</b> Chicken Alfredo, Sugar Snap Peas, Broccoli, Fresh Orange	<b>30 – Meal Day</b> <b>8:30a-9:30a Breakfast</b> Fried Egg Sandwich, Oatmeal, Mango, Berry Smoothie <b>11:30a-12:30p</b> Parmesan Fish, Brown Rice, Prince Charles Vegetables, Fresh Pear	<b>31</b> CLOSED FOR NEW YEAR'S EVE 		
<b>Light Bites – Dine in Only</b> Bourbon Chicken, Sugar Snap Peas, Vegetable Egg Roll, Kiwi	<b>Light Bites – Dine in Only</b> Crab Cakes, Lemony Broccoli, Sourdough Roll, Tangerine Clementine	<b>Light Bites – Dine in Only</b> Italian Meatball Sub, Garden Salad, Apple Sauce	<b>Light Bites – Dine in Only</b> Mojo Chicken, Red Grapes	<b>Light Bites – Dine in Only</b> BBQ Chicken Flatbread, Garden Salad, Banana

## December 2025 - Activities Calendar

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
<b>1</b> 10a Silver Sneakers 1-4p Chess Club 2-3p Diamond Art Club	<b>2 (Giving Tuesday)</b> 9a Zumba Gold A <b>9a Friends of a Feather Quilting Group</b> 10a Zumba Gold B 12:30p Euchre <b>2:30p Cardio Drumming</b>	<b>3</b> <b>Paws for a Cause Campaign Starts</b> 8:30a Blood Pressure Checks 10a Silver Sneakers 12:30p Mahjong 1:00-3:00p Wii Bowling <b>5:30p Gaylord Community Orchestra Christmas Concert (By Donation Only)</b>	<b>4</b> 9a Zumba Gold A 10a Zumba Gold B 1p Penny Bingo 3:30p Grayling Pharmacy Bingo	<b>5</b> 10:30a Bible Study 10:45a Fit for the Aging 1p Pantry Bingo
<b>8</b> <b>9a-4:30p Footcare</b> 10a Silver Sneakers <b>10a-11:30a Free Christmas Origami Class</b> <b>11a-3:30p Versiti Blood Drive</b> 1-4p Chess Club 2-3p Diamond Art Club	<b>9</b> 9a Zumba Gold A 10a Zumba Gold B <b>10a Grief Support Group</b> 12:30p Euchre <b>2:30p Cardio Drumming</b>	<b>10</b> 8:30a Blood Pressure Checks <b>9a New to Medicare</b> 10a Silver Sneakers 12:30p Mahjong <b>12:45p Christmas Karaoke</b> 1:00-3:00p Wii Bowling	<b>11</b> 9a Zumba Gold A 10a Zumba Gold B 1p Penny Bingo <b>4-6p Christmas Special Dinner</b>	<b>12</b> 10:30a Bible Study 10:45a Fit for the Aging 1p Pantry Bingo
<b>15</b> 10a Silver Sneakers <b>12:30 Free Christmas Ornament Making Class</b> 1-4p Chess Club 2-3p Diamond Art Club	<b>16</b> 9a Zumba Gold A 10a Zumba Gold B 12:30p Euchre <b>2:30p Cardio Drumming</b> <b>5:00p Dial-A-Ride Christmas Lights Tour</b>	<b>17</b> 8:30a Blood Pressure Checks 10a Silver Sneakers <b>11a Alzheimer's Support @ the Brook</b> 12:30p Mahjong 1:00-3:00p Wii Bowling <b>1-3p Commodities</b>	<b>18</b> 9a Zumba Gold A 10a Zumba Gold B <b>11:30a Birthday Lunch</b> <b>12:30 Free Christmas Ornament Making Class</b> 1p Penny Bingo <b>1p Legal Advice</b>	<b>19</b> 10:30a Bible Study 1p Pantry Bingo
<b>22</b> <b>9a-4:30p Footcare</b> <b>10:30a-3:00p Secretary of State Mobile Office</b> 1-4p Chess Club 2-3p Diamond Art Club	<b>23</b> 12:30p Euchre	<b>24</b> <b>CLOSED FOR CHRISTMAS EVE</b> 	<b>25</b> <b>CLOSED FOR CHRISTMAS DAY</b> 	<b>26</b> 10:30a Bible Study 1p Pantry Bingo
<b>29</b> 1-4p Chess Club 2-3p Diamond Art Club	<b>30</b> 12:30p Euchre <b>12:00 Noon Year's Eve</b>	<b>31</b> <b>CLOSED FOR NEW YEAR'S EVE</b> 		



# December



## Down

1. A circular arrangement of greenery, flowers, or ornaments used as decoration.
3. A decorative light or lantern, often placed outside during winter nights.
4. A holder designed to support a candle upright.
5. A fragrant spice made from the bark of a tropical tree, common in holiday treats.
6. A cold wind blowing from the north.
9. A unique, six-pointed crystal of frozen water vapor.
10. A four-sided spinning top used in a traditional Hanukkah game.
11. Edible brown nuts often roasted during the holiday season.
14. A sweet, spiced cake or cookie, often shaped like people or houses at Christmas.

## Across

2. A severe snowstorm with strong winds and low visibility.
5. Tart red berries used in sauces and festive decorations.
7. The act of sliding downhill on a long, flat sled.
8. The Jewish Festival of Lights, celebrated for eight days in December.
12. Covered with or resembling frost; very cold.
13. A cooling, minty flavor often used in candy canes and holiday desserts.
15. Hanging, tapering spikes of ice formed by dripping, freezing water.
16. A large sock hung by the fireplace and filled with small gifts.
17. Cushioned coverings worn over the ears for warmth in cold weather.
18. The Christmas season or period around Christmastime.
19. Arctic deer known for pulling Santa's sleigh in Christmas lore.

**Feeling Stuck? Flip this Page Upside Down & Use a Magnifying Glass to View the Word Bank**



Blizzard • Candles • Cinnamon • Cranberries • Dreidel • Earmuffs • Frosty • Gingerbread • Hanukkah • Ices • Luminary • Northwind • Peppermint • Reindeer • Snowflake • Stocking • Tobogganing • Wreath • Yule

## Return to the North Pole: The Magic Behind the Workshop (Continued)

Giant kettles bubbled with cocoa while cookie sheets filled every counter. At the center of it all stood Chef Kate Kettlewhisk, her apron proudly declaring, "Bake Joy, Not Just Cookies." "Everyone thinks Christmas magic runs on reindeer power," Chef Kate said with a wink. "But truthfully, it runs on meals shared and bellies filled. No one spreads joy on an empty stomach." The elf-chef pointed to a group of elves rolling dough, humming carols. "Each cookie is made with care," Kettlewhisk said. "You can't measure love by teaspoons, but we try anyway." Watching them, I thought of the kitchen volunteers at our Senior Center, the ones who show up early to make sure every meal is ready to be delivered with care. Like Chef Kate's elves, they don't just feed people; they nourish them.

Next, we entered the Sleighport, a long glowing hall lined with sleighs of all shapes and colors. The air smelled faintly of pine and polish. There I met Kathy Caraway Sleighsong, scarf trailing like a ribbon in the wind, organizing delivery routes with a map spread across a glowing snow-table. She was tightening the reins on a sleigh labeled Meals on Reins. "Most folks think Christmas Eve is the tough part," Kathy said, smiling. "But it's the daily runs that matter most - checking on folks who can't get out, bringing them their meals, a smile, a word of cheer. It's not about speed, it's about connection."

That struck me deeply. Because our Senior Center's volunteer drivers do the same, delivering more than food. They deliver presence. They remind people they're not forgotten. "You'd be amazed how far a 'Merry Christmas' can travel when it's said with care," Sleighsong said with a smile.

From there, Workshop Director Brian led me to a bright room bursting with laughter, music, and glitter...so much glitter. At its center stood Crafty Carlie Glitterspool, wearing a paint-splattered smock and the world's most radiant grin. "When we create, we connect," Carlie told me, holding up a hand-painted bird ornament. "Some elves paint, some knit, some just chat and sip cocoa, but everyone leaves a little lighter."

On the wall behind her hung hundreds of drawings and crafts made by elves of all ages, proof that joy multiplies when shared. And I thought again of our Senior Center's art and fitness volunteers, the ones who teach, paint, stretch, and dance, reminding us that staying active and creative isn't just fun - it's healing.

Our final stop was a quiet, candlelit nook where scrolls and quills seemed to move on their own. It was there that I met Helen Hearthscribe Everbright, a lovely elf and the North Pole's keeper of stories and order. She didn't speak loudly, she didn't have to.

"Every good deed must be remembered," she said, smoothing the parchment that stretched farther than the eye could see. "Not so that we can boast, but so we never forget how many hands it takes to make the world kind." She unrolled a scroll that seemed to stretch for miles. "Every name here represents someone who gave a little of themselves for another. They may think no one noticed, but we did. We always do." And I realized, our Senior Center has its own scroll, too. It's not written on paper, but in kindness: in meals served, hands held, laughter shared.

At the end of my visit, I sat by Santa's great hearth. His chair sat empty, but it didn't feel empty. Brian Oakensleigh Merrywick handed me one last mug of cocoa. "People think the big man makes the magic," he said. "But truth is, we all do, together." I nodded, thinking of our Senior Center's volunteers: the cooks, drivers, teachers, greeters, and helpers. The "elves" who keep the magic alive every day of the year.

Maybe Santa's magic isn't found in flying reindeer or bottomless cookie plates. Maybe it's found right here, in every act of service, every shared laugh, every moment of care.

As I waved goodbye to the elves and stepped back into the snow, I realized something simple but profound: The North Pole isn't just a place, it's a feeling. And lucky for us, we've got our very own version right here at the Senior Center, and I couldn't wait to get back home so I could visit!



Leanne Chouinard  
Practice Manager  
Thomas Judd Care Center

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## Assistance to Help You Maintain Your Independence

### Commission on Aging Services, Classes, and 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 8:30 am - 10:00 am.

#### 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 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm @ the Commission on Aging.

#### Congregate Meal Program:

Breakfasts: Mon-Fri from 8:30—9:30 am.  
Lunches: Mon-Fri from 11:30--12:30pm.  
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.

##### State Health Insurance Program (SHIP)

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.

#### Geri Fit:

Learn helpful skills to improve balance and strength.

#### Fitness Programs

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

**Silver Sneakers:** Held on Mondays and Wednesdays at 10:00 am. It is an 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:** Held on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 9:00 am and 10:00 am. It is 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 of Programs

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 2025*

#### At the Senior Center

We served a total of 872  
Congregate Meals

#### In-Home Services

HDM – 3,800  
Respite – 96.75  
Homemaker – 209.25  
Bathing – 30

#### 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



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*December*  




- ❄ Advent
- ❄ Aglow
- ❄ Alpenglow
- ❄ Angelic
- ❄ Arctic
- ❄ Bauble
- ❄ Benediction
- ❄ Blustery
- ❄ Brumal
- ❄ Caroling

- ❄ Celestial
- ❄ Chilly
- ❄ Confectionery
- ❄ Decorous
- ❄ Ebullient
- ❄ Eglantine
- ❄ Epiphany
- ❄ Evergreen
- ❄ Festoon
- ❄ Flurries

- ❄ Frostbite
- ❄ Garland
- ❄ Glacial
- ❄ Glisten
- ❄ Hearth
- ❄ Hibernial
- ❄ Icicle
- ❄ Incandescent
- ❄ Jack Frost
- ❄ Jubilant

- ❄ Kringle
- ❄ Merriment
- ❄ Mistletoe
- ❄ Nocturnal
- ❄ Nutcracker
- ❄ Ornamentation
- ❄ Pageantry
- ❄ Poinsettia
- ❄ Resplendent
- ❄ Revelry

- ❄ Sleighbells
- ❄ Solstice
- ❄ Snowdrift
- ❄ Sparkling
- ❄ Tannenbaum
- ❄ Tinsel
- ❄ Toboggan
- ❄ Tranquility
- ❄ Wintry
- ❄ Yuletide



## *Welcome to The Kitchen Corner*

Make your way to the Kitchen Corner to visit with Kate Moshier for a monthly serving of culinary inspiration and community connection. On each visit Kate will have a recipe to share and also Special Dinner recaps and highlights, information about upcoming COA events, and anything else culinary or nutrition related. Whether you're looking for a new dish to try or you're curious about what's cooking at the Senior Center, The Kitchen Corner has something for everyone. Pull a chair up to the fire and stay awhile.

### **December Nutrition Education: Food Safety While Dining Out**

When going out to eat, you must extend a certain amount of trust to the people preparing your food, but what are the actions that YOU can take before, during, and after your meal to further decrease your chance of foodborne illness?

#### **Before you go:**

Check your local health department's website and check the restaurant's inspection score to see if it meets food safety standards.

#### **During your visit:**

##### 1. Wash your hands.

Washing your hands can prevent germs from getting to your silverware, food, and mouth. Washing your hands should be the first step and every time you eat or handle food, whether at home or dining out.

##### 2. Order "Cook to Order" foods well done.

There is usually nothing wrong with eating a medium-rare steak or an over-easy egg, but can you be too careful? Eating undercooked foods like meat, seafood, eggs, and other dairy can make you sick and is best consumed fully cooked for safety. Check seafood and poultry before eating to ensure its cooked all the way through.

##### 3. Do not eat lukewarm food.

Hot food must be served hot and cold food must be served cold. Bacteria grow exponentially in the "Danger Zone" temperatures between 42-134 degrees so if you are served lukewarm food, send it back. Temperatures are not just for restaurant food; this goes for at home too. If it's not hot enough, reheat before you eat!

#### **After your visit:**

1. Refrigerate leftovers within 1-2 hours of eating and consume within 3 days. You can always write the date on your carryout box from the restaurant to make it easier to remember when to eat, or toss it out by.

2. Don't go shopping or run other errands. It is possible to get a food-borne illness from cooked food that has been sitting in a vehicle longer than 1-2 hours instead of being refrigerated. When on a shopping trip, make lunch your last stop, or don't take leftovers with you.

For more information about food safety visit: <https://www.foodsafety.gov>

### **Maraschino Cherry Cheeseball Recipe**

Christmas is a time for celebration and for gathering around the table with your loved ones and all your favorite foods... and maybe some not-so-favorites. At any large gathering I think there is always something that someone or even everyone doesn't like, but its tradition, and so year after year... there it is. This is that recipe for me. Let me start by saying that this recipe is by no means a bad recipe; it's just not to my taste. My husband loves it, and a tradition has formed for me to pretend to suffer while making it and for him to tease me about it, which might be even more fun than if I enjoyed eating it. Do you have a food tradition that you look forward to each season? Or, one you don't? I would love to hear about it. From my family to yours, Merry Christmas!

- 16oz cream cheese
- 10oz jar of maraschino cherries
- 1/2c. chopped pecans or walnuts
- 1tbl sugar (optional)
- Pinch of salt

1. Soften your cream cheese to room temperature. Chop about half of your cherries and add them with the softened cheese to a mixing bowl. Add a splash of the cherry juice, or 1tbl of sugar or honey for sweetness and a pinch of salt for contrast.
2. Mix thoroughly. Scrape down the sides of the bowl with a rubber spatula and form the mix into a ball. Pour the chopped nuts on a plate and, with greased hands, take the cheese mix from the bowl and roll in the nuts until coated.
3. Wrap tightly in plastic wrap and refrigerate for an hour to help hold its shape.
4. Unwrap and serve with crackers.

## **Senior Gazette Staff**

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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.

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Mark Ostahowski, Member

Jason Thompson, Member

Cheryl Wolken, Member

### **Staff**

Brian McLaughlin, Director

Todd Lako, Facility Maintenance

Tammy Findlay, Advocacy & Resource Coordinator

Carlie Wilson, Senior Center Manager

Lynn Cheney, Office Manager

Receptionists: Helen Nolan & Patty Lemmons

Kate Moshier, Nutrition Manager

Cooks: Megan Hagle, Dalton Keir

Sarah Pollock, In-Home Services Manager

Jan Williamson, RN

Kathy Meisner, Program Assistant  
Homemakers:

Abby, Danette, Jill, Kathy, and Susan

## **Cooking Classes Start in January**

Winter boredom setting in? Starting January 6th and running every other week for 6 sessions, join Kate Moshier on a culinary adventure around the world in a series of cooking demonstrations and tastings, of course. Travel through the Southern United States, Mexico, France, China, Italy, and the Mediterranean as you learn new cooking techniques and recipes from each culture.

- Jan 6th: France – Channel your inner Julia Child with her French Vinaigrette dressing over mixed salad greens with Potato Leek soup (Vichyssoise if you're fancy)
- Jan 20th: Southern US- Take a trip back home with Kate and make fluffy, Southern-style buttermilk biscuits and homemade sausage gravy- A surprisingly quick and endlessly comforting Southern breakfast- or anytime you want meal.
- Feb 3rd: Mexico- Make your Quesadillas explode with layers of flavor, see how quick and easy a quick blender sauce is to make, and learn to prepare Mexican rice from scratch.
- Feb 17th: Italian- Learn to make meatballs with fresh ingredients that would make an Italian Nonna proud, and then a Spaghetti & Marinara sauce to go with them.
- March 3rd: Chinese – Skip the Chinese buffet line and blanch, velvet, and stir fry your way through creating a Chicken & Vegetables in brown sauce dish that may rival your favorite restaurant's
- March 10th: Mediterranean- Pair fresh vegetables and salty cheese together with their classic dressing for a Greek-style salad, and marinate and grill some Mediterranean-style chicken breast for a light meal that is unbelievably flavorful.

Call Kate Moshier for more information! 989-348-7123.

## **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](http://www.griefshare.org/about)

[www.griefshare.org/groups/169551](http://www.griefshare.org/groups/169551)

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rboykindc@gmail.com

## Get Involved at the COA this Winter Season!

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- Diamond Art Club: Every Monday @ 2:00p
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- Mahjong: Every Wednesday @ 12:30p
- Fit for the Aging: Every Friday @ 10:45a

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