

Crawford County Senior Gazette February 2021

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Featured Article

Debby Belknap

"Ya have to be a little bit crazy"

It is the quintessential Up-North log cabin in the woods, by the river, at the end of a long drive. Only a handful of big timbers make up the walls. The stone fireplace occupies most of one wall; the one opposite the tall windows that give Debby Belknap, and her husband Howard, a picture-perfect view of the AuSable as it quietly flows past.

A winding path meanders circuitously from the canoe-and-paddle themed gate to the big front veranda, bordered on both sides by the flower gardens that are one of Debby's passions. Everything about the home shouts, "Welcome!" Everything implies that it's been the Belknap place for generations. But it hasn't. Nor is it the most interesting place they have called Home.

Debby grew up in Okemos, but said she's been coming up north since she was five years old. "We



came up to Cub Lake any time we got the chance," she said. "My parents got a place on Lake Margarethe when they retired."

Married now for 57 years, Debby and Howard have known each other since Jr High, but it was Driver's Ed that put them in the right place to fall in love. "We were in the same Driver's Ed car," she explained. "One of Howard's coaches was our matchmaker."

Neither Debby nor Howard is content to sit and watch the world go by, which is why, in 1965 after graduating high school and gathering up a couple years of continuing education, they boarded a train for Alaska. "I remember when I was a kid, sitting on the steps of the depot watching the trains and wondering where they were going," said Debby.

"Alaska was a lot less developed in 1965," Howard said. "I took a job in Sitka working for Alaska Lumber and Pulp. We were 20 and 21 years old then." The Belknaps have returned to

Continued on Page 5



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on Aging & Senior
Center**

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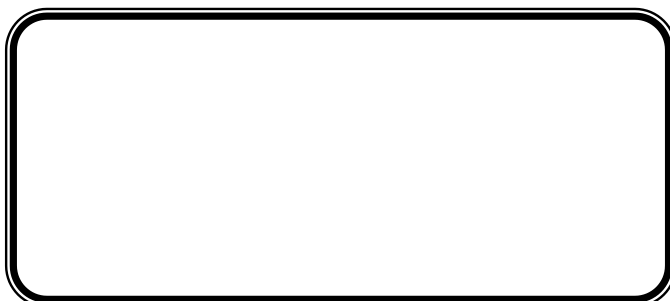
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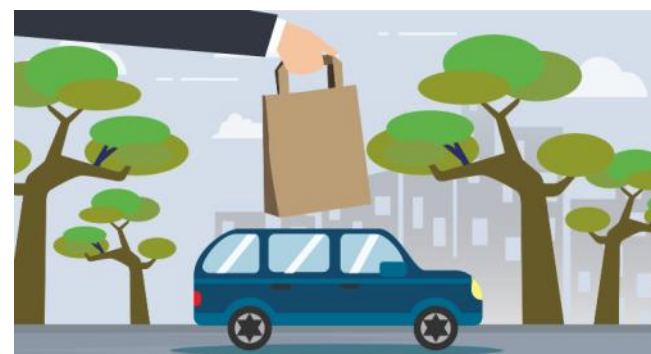


Communication Corner... **Notes from the Director**

We had to pause our work on the design development of the new Senior Center this past month to work on bringing our building project budget estimate in line. We have applied for a \$268,700 grant through the Allen Foundation which if received will entirely fund the kitchen equipment and dining room furniture. It will also allow us to increase our Nutrition Manager position back to full-time so work can begin on developing our rental and catering business. This new revenue stream will be vital to operating our new Center.

The Board and I will be working through a list of items to prune from our building project at our next board meeting scheduled for Wednesday, February 3rd at 4:30pm. This process will help us bring our estimated budget in line with the bond revenue available. This meeting will be on-line or you can call in to the meeting. Log in information is located at www.crawfordcoa.org or you can call our office at (989) 348-7123. There will be time for public input after the building options are reviewed. We want to hear from you, so please join us.

-Alice Snyder, Director



Congregate Meal Options Temporarily Expanded

While we are still under the COVID-19 exemptions for our Congregate Meal program, we have been informed that there are a couple of exceptions to our normal rules which may allow you greater access.

- You do not need to order/eat the Hot Meal of the day to pick up meals. We have a variety of frozen meal options available every day. You can pick any of these options instead of the Hot Meal.
- You can pick up enough frozen meals to last a few days or even pick-up meals once a week. During the cold, winter months this might be a nice option especially if you don't like to drive in the winter. Pick the best weather day and call in your order. You can order up to 2 meals per day.

We hope these exceptions will allow you the opportunity to pick up more meals each week. If you are calling to order and not able to get what you would like, please don't hesitate to ask to speak with Director, Alice Snyder. We want to break down any barriers you are having so we can feed you!



Michigan Department of Health & Human Services

MDHHS Changes

Gov. Whitmer, MDHHS announced January 21st, 2021 that food assistance recipients will see additional benefits by end of January; Fifteen percent increase in payments will help families cope with pandemic. The 15% increase in Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits is for six months, ending in June.

Beginning January 1, 2021 all **Food Stamp Recipients** that have no earned income and are 60+ or disabled do not require an interview at their Food Stamp Redetermination unless there is an outstanding issue or question about the recertification process.

Also, as of January 1, 2021, MDHHS

Recipients 60+ or disabled no longer have to turn in **on-going medical expenses** each month. Recipients 60+ or disabled will be required to turn in one-time ongoing medical expense(s) of more than \$35 to receive a Standard Medical Deduction of \$165. If the recipient 60+ or disabled has actual medical expenses which are more than the Standard Medical Deduction of \$165, will have the option of verifying their actual expenses instead of receiving the \$165 Standard Medical Deduction

For questions regarding these changes, please contact Tammy Findlay, Advocacy, Resource Coordinator at (989) 745-4074

General Giving

Although the Crawford County Commission on Aging is supported by state & federal grants, Crawford County millage monies, Community Foundation of Northeast Michigan, 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 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.

General Donations Made By:

Pamela & Richard Alexander	Shirley Matthews	Ron & Margaret Yon
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Velma Fields	Wayne & Rose Mary Nelson	Jack Millikin Inc.
Arvo & Sandy Lakanen	Robert Smock	McBride Family Foundation
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Volunteers and Contributions received after January 15th will be acknowledged in the next edition of the Senior Gazette.

Memorial Gifts

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 Plaque to be displayed in the Dining Room.

Legacy Giving

Planned gifts are a thoughtful way to remember our seniors. Please consider use in your estate planning or have your attorney add an addendum to your will. Your bequest to the Crawford COA will benefit many seniors and help us continue vitally needed several for years to come.

Sponsors

Our sponsors make it possible to offer programs, events, and activities we would not otherwise have funding for. If you're interested in becoming a sponsor give us a call at (989) 348-7123.

Our Sponsors

Hearing Clinic Sponsored by
Advantage Audiology

Legal Aid Offered by
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Memorial Donations Made By:

<i>Scott Foster In Memory of Tina Foster</i>	<i>Nancy Lemmen & Mark Hansen In Memory of Tina Foster</i>
<i>Nancy Lemmen & Mark Hansen In Memory of Mary Parker</i>	<i>Karen Holemo In Memory of William Buskill Harrison</i>

Gifts of Supplies

You can pick up and donate items on our Wish List rather than making a financial donation:

- Jugs of Cat Litter
- Reams of Copy Paper
- Rolls of Paper Towels
- Toilet Bowl Cleaner
- Bathroom/Shower Cleaner
- Comet/Ajax
- All Purpose Spray Cleaner
- No-Rinse Shower Caps
- Chux (Chucks) Pads
- Case of Save-A-Lot plastic bags for meal delivery (\$50) – call the COA for details

Volunteers

Volunteers give of their time and we could not do what we do without them. Our volunteers save us thousands of dollars of each year in staffing costs.

We are currently looking for more individuals to join our team of Meals on Wheels Drivers. Volunteer applications can be found online at <https://www.crawfordcoa.org/volunteer/volunteer-application>.

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

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Please make check payable to "COA" at 308 Lawndale St. 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.



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Jon Schultz
Chris Seager
Steve Seager
Nancy Smitz
Farrell Thomas
Ellen Thompson
Jon Thompson
Deb Umlor
Janet Weaks
Sandy Woods

Thanks to All Who Came to the Holly Jolly Curbside Christmas Luncheon!

We are so grateful to everyone who came out for our Holly Jolly Christmas Luncheon in December and we are excited to announce the WINNER of our Ugly Christmas Sweater Competition: Jeannie Matista! Honorable Mention to our favorite "Naughty and Nice" pair: Wayne and Rosemary Nelson. Seeing all your friendly faces really brought some cheer to our staff!

Thanks again to our sponsor, The Curator, for donating the Ugly Christmas Sweater Competition prize.

We look forward to seeing you this month at the Valentines Luncheon (see page 6).



February Birthdays

Barbara McCray 2/3
Pete Cheney 2/5
Norm Beach 2/13
Jeannie Matista 2/18
Richard Sobieralski 2/19
Donald Germain 2/21
Janet Gildner 2/21

Get your birthday published in the Senior Gazette! Stop by or call the Senior Center & ask for a form!



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Debby Belknap

Written by Ann Rowland, Photos by Ken Wright, Main Branch Gallery

Alaska many times. In fact, their son lives there, and most summers they spend there with him, helping with the RV park/campground he operates.

"We spent one long summer in Blind River, Ontario," Debby added. "We worked for a camp there, and it is where our daughter was born. We were, I guess you could say, more free-spirited than some people."

There was a slightly more conventional season to their life, though. They settled in Frankenmuth for 30 years, where he worked construction and Debby was the secretary to the High School principal. "But for seven years before that," Debby smiled, "I did voices! I was voice talent for some radio stations in the Saginaw area. WSGW and WIOG. That was a whole lot of fun!"

At the same time, the Belknaps were renovating and operating a Bed and Breakfast in the Keweenaw. "We owned the Garnet House in Calumet and ran it in the summertime. We lived up there for a couple of years, but owned it for 15. While we were there, we were also coming down to Grayling a lot to look in on her parents," Howard said. "And we bought Hanson House."

Debby said, "It was a disaster when we bought it. It had been empty for 45 years, and even though it was a mess, it was beautiful. We made the hard decision to move from the Keweenaw and devoted ourselves to that place." They sold the iconic Grayling mansion in 1996, and moved to the river in 2001.

At 75 and 76 years of age, neither Debby nor Howard is content to just sit. Winking at

her husband, Debby said, "I like old things. That's why I keep him around." Their home is filled with lovely and unique antique pieces... and art. Debby has stepped into the art world with both feet. "I got my first college credit at age 72," she bragged. "I'm in my third year of art school now. I'm not aiming for a degree, I'm just getting credits. Because I want to, and I like it."

As a busy artist she said she doesn't have time for much else.

She works primarily in birch bark, using only bark from trees that are dead or down, and sometimes sourcing it from visits to the Keweenaw. "I first

saw birchbark art in Alaska and looked for a way to create things using just scraps." The result of her study and persistence is a body of exquisite pieces that resemble oil paintings more than scenes made by meticulously gluing tiny bits of wood to a base. One of her pieces, depicting 18 fish and forest animals, was in the Top 3 entries in Grayling's 2020 Art Expo.

Howard converted an outbuilding on their property into a guest house and art studio for her. "I spend a lot of time out here. I just love it," she said. "It's always a mess...but it's art!"

Howard likes to go for long walks and brag on his wife's art. "You don't want to be doing nothing," he said. "We're hoping to get back to Alaska next summer...2021. We're

going to just keep doing what we like to do for as long as we can."

Debby smiled and waved her hand toward all the things that make up their life. "Ya have to be a little bit crazy, but we just believe in doing something exceptional. And we love our life."



GetSetUp Keeping Older Adults Connected

In October the Aging & Adult Services Agency at the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) announced a partnership with GetSetup to create a new, free resource for Michiganders age 60 and over as the state continues to face the pandemic.

GetSetup.io is a pioneering social platform where seniors can learn about a variety of topics through a live, interactive peer-to-peer teaching model. Classes run 10 hours a day and there are more than 150 individual classes available. Offerings include classes on how to use a smartphone or tablet, how to use services like video conferencing, Gmail, Facebook, grocery delivery and telemedicine, as well as virtual social hours. Its expert guides hold graduate and master's degrees in business, music, science, etc. An internet connection is all that is needed.

Janet Gaffke, Tom Gaffke, and Cheryl Melroy have all taken classes through GetSetup. Janet says, "GetSetup is very simple to get started....There is also a chat box that pops up in case help is needed."

Users can get started by registering at <https://getsetup.io/auth/register>. A New Member Orientation class is provided for those who would like to get more comfortable searching and registering for classes. Michigan users can use the coupon code "MICHIGANHEALTH" to waive any fees associated with small group classes.

According to Cheryl, "The best thing about GetSetup is you don't have to leave home to participate." This aspect of GetSetup is especially helpful for homebound seniors, those who are maintaining quarantine to protect against COVID-19, and those who simply would like the connection without having to travel down icy roads in the Michigan winter.

GetSetup is an avenue for learning new things, something Janet and Tom are striving for during the isolation of the pandemic. Classes are something to which they look forward with a chance to see other people even if it is in a virtual environment. "There really is something for everyone on GetSetup and if it is not there, it can be suggested for the future," says Janet. "Some are more helpful than others depending upon one's level of interest and knowledge on a topic, but all stick very closely to the posted timelines for starting and ending."

If any older Michiganders are struggling to understand technology and would like to stay connected virtually during this time they are encouraged to give GetSetup a try.

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Dessert Tuesdays

In February, we'll be again giving away FREE desserts every Tuesday with your Congregate meals.

- National Carrot Cake day will first be celebrated on February 2nd even though it's officially the next day. YUM!
- February 9th is our Special Valentine's Day Luncheon (see page #). You'll enjoy Red Velvet Cake with your meal.
- On February 16th, we'll celebrate National Cherry Pie Day (which happens that Saturday). Anybody know why we'd celebrate this day in February? From a quick search, it appears it's connected to George Washington who cut down the cherry tree. His birthday is in February!
- February 23rd is National Banana Bread day so we'll brown some bananas and make a loaf for you. I think we'll even throw in a few chocolate chips to sweeten your day!

Simply call the Senior Center at (989) 348-7123 between the hours of 9 –11:30am to order your meal for take-out. Then pick up curbside from 11:30 – 12:30pm and enjoy dessert with your meal!

Lunch is a suggested donation of \$3.50 for those 60+ or a cost of \$6 for those under 60.



Sleep Education for Everyone Program

Sleep is vital to our health and individuals of all ages can face challenges when trying to get the right amount of quality sleep. MSU Extension District #4 is offering a virtual Sleep Education class.

This class will take place **Thursdays, March 4 - April 15**, from 1-1:30 p.m. via Zoom. Each session includes a short 2-3 minute educational video designed to deliver key concepts. The rest of the time is spent discussing the topics, brainstorming solutions to possible obstacles to improving sleep, and goal setting.

There is no cost for the workshop but registration is required. Visit <https://events.anr.msu.edu/sleepmar4/> to sign up or contact Nicole with any questions you may have: wethingn@msu.edu.



Stimulus Checks On their Way

The IRS and the Treasury Department began issuing a second round of Economic Impact Payments, often referred to as stimulus payments, at the beginning of January. Most people who have an adjusted gross income for 2019 of up to \$75,000 for individuals and up to \$150,000 for married couples filing joint returns and surviving spouses, will receive the full amount of the second payment: \$600 for individuals or \$1,200 for married couples and up to \$600 for each qualifying child. For filers with income above those amounts, the payment amount is reduced.

In an effort to get payments out as quickly as possible they are being distributed as direct deposit payments, paper checks, and by prepaid debit card. Direct deposit payments may take several days to post to accounts. Those who don't receive a direct deposit should watch their mail carefully for either a paper check or a prepaid debit (EIP) card.

EIP Cards are safe, convenient and secure. EIP Card recipients can make purchases online or in stores anywhere Visa® Debit Cards are accepted. They can get cash from domestic in-network ATMs, transfer funds to a bank account, check their card balance, and obtain a replacement EIP Card if needed without incurring any fees. More information about these cards is available at EIPcard.com.

Taxpayers should note that the form of payment for the second mailed EIP may be different than the first mailed EIP. Some people who received a paper check last time

might receive a prepaid debit card this time, and vice versa.

The IRS emphasizes that there is no action required by eligible individuals: payments are automatic, and people should not contact their financial institutions or the IRS with payment timing questions. People who wish to check the status of their payments are urged to check online at IRS.gov/GetMyPayment, rather than calling the agency or their financial institutions or tax software providers.

Beware of scams related to these payments. The IRS will NOT contact you to verify personal or financial information before issuing an Economic Impact Payment. The IRS does not send unsolicited texts or emails asking for your banking information. If you are contacted in either of these ways criminals are trying to steal your Economic Impact Payments.

If an eligible taxpayer does not get a payment or it is less than expected, it may be claimed on the 2020 tax return as the Recovery Rebate Credit. Remember, Economic Impact Payments are an advance payment of what will be called the Recovery Rebate Credit on the 2020 Form 1040 or Form 1040-SR.

For more information about Economic Impact Payments and the 2020 Recovery Rebate Credit, visit IRS.gov/eip. For other COVID-19-related tax relief, visit IRS.gov/Coronavirus.



Program Provides Free Fruits and Vegetables

Crawford County residents ages 18+ can earn \$100 in vouchers to purchase fresh/frozen/canned fruits and vegetables by participating in one free, five-session, virtual, nutrition education course. In order to qualify for the \$100 you must attend ALL five classes and return a post-session survey.

The next qualify class is Eat Healthy Be Active and will take place on Wednesdays at 7pm from February 10th-March 10th. To register contact Kathy Jacobsen at (231) 437-3481 or [kjacobson@mhc.net](mailto:kjacobsen@mhc.net).



Valentine's Luncheon

The Crawford County Commission on Aging & Senior Center would like to invite you to our Valentine's Day Luncheon on **Tuesday, February 9th from 11:30-1pm**. On the menu will be Glazed Pork Tenderloin, Roasted Redskins, Prince Charles Blend Vegetables, Applesauce Cup, and Red Velvet Cake. The luncheon will be curbside pickup and **RSVP is required** by calling the Commission on Aging any time before to place your order (989) 348-7123. The meal is a suggested donation of \$3.50 or under 60 cost of \$6. If you have any questions please give us a call.



NO SMOKING *Thank You*



COVID-19 and Tobacco

Adults of any age that smoke are at increased risk of severe illness from COVID-19. Being a current or former cigarette smoker increases the risk for severe illness from COVID-19.

- Cigarette smoking compromises the immune system, is linked to lung inflammation and puts people at greater risk for pulmonary infection.
- Smoking harms the airway lining cells that contain cilia, which are our essential defenders against viruses like SARS-CoV-2.
- People who smoke have more ACE2 receptors in their lungs. The virus that causes COVID-19 uses these receptors as a 'doorway' to get into lung cells, thus allowing for more severe illness from the virus.

Secondhand smoke has not been established as a separate, known risk factor in developing more severe COVID-19 symptoms.

- Secondhand smoke is a serious health hazard which causes over 41,000 deaths in the U.S. each year.
- Many of the underlying conditions caused or made worse by secondhand smoke are potential risk factors for developing more severe COVID-19 symptoms.
- 100% smoke-free environments are the

only effective way to fully protect people from secondhand smoke exposure.

- Smoking indoors can increase the transmission risk of COVID-19 because people would need to take their mask off to smoke and respiratory droplets could be transferred when a smoker exhales.

With smoking being firmly linked to more severe disease from COVID-19, there has never been a better time to quit.

- Smoking cessation improves health status and enhances quality of life.
- When people quit smoking, the number of ACE2 receptors in a person's lungs decreases.
- **Smoking cessation medications approved by the FDA and behavioral counseling can double the chances of quitting smoking.**

If you are interested in quitting tobacco use please call our District Health Department # 10 Tobacco Treatment Specialist, Angie Gullekson at 231-876-3813 to discuss your options or visit <https://www.livewell4health.org/tobacco-cessation>

Source: Covid-19 and Tobacco: The American Lung Association, <https://www.lung.org/getmedia/7b8b5308-0219-44f1-a2f6-f770e3adbc91/covid-tobacco.pdf>



Introduction to Zoom Workshop

Taking online classes can be a great way to socialize, learn from the comfort of your own home, and stay active. Michigan State University Extension District 4 is hosting a monthly Introduction to Zoom Workshop. The next Intro to Zoom Session will be held on **Wednesday, February 17th at noon.**

Learn how to join meetings online via your computer, tablet, smart phone, or other device. This is a great chance to try it out and play with the features while someone is available to talk you through any challenges.

To join the meeting visit <https://msu.zoom.us/j/95354614775>. Or join via conference call by calling (312) 626-6799 and entering the passcode 330171. For more information call (989) 348-7123.

COVID-19 Vaccine Scam Alert

Be on the lookout for COVID-19 scams:

- You likely will not need to pay anything out-of-pocket to get the vaccine during this public health emergency
- You cannot pay to put your name on a list to get the vaccine early
- No one from Medicare or the Health Department will contact you
- Beware of providers offering other products, treatments, or medicines to prevent the virus
- No one from a vaccine distribution site or health care payer will call and ask for your Medicare number, Social Security number, or banking information to sign you up for a vaccine.

If you receive any suspicious calls, emails, or letters you can contact the Senior Medicare Patrol to report Medicare fraud, errors, or abuse at 1-877-808-2468 or at smpresource.org.

Support Groups

11th Step Meeting - Open Meeting

Mondays, 7pm

St. Francis Episcopal Church, Grayling

ACA (Adult Children of Alcoholics)

Wednesdays, 7pm

St. Francis Episcopal Church, Grayling

Addition Support Group

Thursdays & Saturdays, 6:30pm

Grayling Baptist Church

Adjustment to Vision Loss Support Group

2nd Monday, 9:30am to 10:30am

The Commission on Aging & Senior Center

Alzheimer's Support Group

3rd Wednesday, 11am

The Brook of Grayling, 503 Rose St.

For more info call the COA 989-348-7123

Choices (Anger Management)

Mondays, 4:30-6pm at **River House**

For more info or to register call 989-348-3169

Cancer Support Group

Every other Tuesday, 6pm

at **Grayling Baptist Church**

For anyone touched by cancer

Call Cathy at 989-348-8684 for more info.

Grayling Alcoholics Anonymous

Monday, Wednesday, Friday at Noon

Sunday, Tuesday, Friday at 8pm

Women's Meeting, Thursdays at Noon

At St. Francis Episcopal Church, Grayling

Saturdays - Noon

At Grayling Township Hall

Thursdays, 8pm in the Crawford Rm,

Munson Healthcare Grayling Hospital

For more AA info call 888-596-0699

or visit www.area34district12.org

Grayling Al-Anon

Tuesdays 11am

Women's Meeting, Thursdays at Noon

St. Francis Episcopal Church, Grayling

For more info call Greg at 989-348-1382

Healthy Relationships &

Empowerment for Women

Thursdays, 4pm-5:30pm, at **River House**

For more info call 348-3169

Munson Hospice Grief Support Group

3rd Friday, 11am

Munson Home Health, 324 Meadows Dr.

Narcotics Anonymous

Wednesdays, 8pm,

St. Francis Episcopal Church, Grayling

For more info call Ted 989-429-8100

Overeaters Anonymous

Call Patsy 989-348-3073

Personal Triumphs for S.E.L.F. Discovery

Thursdays, 5-6:30pm, at **River House**

For women suffering PTSD Symptoms

Call Barbara at 989-348-3169 to register

TOPS Weight Loss Class

Thursdays 4:30-6pm

St. John Lutheran Church, Grayling

More info, call Mary Kay at 989-348-1398

February 2021 ~ Meal Calendar

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
1 11:30-12:30 Lunch Chicken Stir Fry, Brown Rice, Peas & Carrots, Kiwi	2 11:30a-12:30p Lunch Beef Tips, Brown Rice, Corn, Applesauce, Carrot Cake 4:30-5:30pm Dinner BBQ Pork Sandwich, Dill & Garlic Potatoes, Asparagus, Orange	3 11:30a-12:30p Lunch BBQ Chicken, Parsley Potatoes, Carrots, Grapes 4:30-5:30pm Dinner Lemon Baked Fish, Redskin Potatoes, Green Beans, Pear	4 11:30a-12:30p Lunch Spaghetti & Meatballs, Peas, Grapes, Breadstick 4:30-5:30pm Dinner French Dip Sandwich, Redskin Potatoes, Broccoli, Banana	5 11:30-12:30 Lunch Pork Roast, Baked Potato, Green Beans, Pear
8 11:30-12:30 Lunch Cabbage Rolls, Parsley Potatoes, Peas & Carrots, Blueberry Yogurt	9 11:30-1 V-Day Luncheon Glazed Pork Tenderloin, Roasted Redskins, Prince Charles Blend Vegetables, Applesauce Cup, Red Velvet Cake 4:30-5:30p Dinner Pork Chop Supreme, Redskin Potatoes, Brussels Sprouts, Kiwi	10 11:30a-12:30p Lunch Steak Salisbury, Mashed Potatoes w/ Gravy, Brussels Sprouts, Grapes 4:30-5:30pm Dinner Beef Enchilada, Brown Rice, Corn, Pear	11 11:30a-12:30p Lunch Chicken Cordon Bleu, Mashed Potatoes, Green Beans, Orange 4:30-5:30pm Dinner Sweet & Sour Meatballs, Brown Rice, Peas & Carrots, Kiwi	12 11:30-12:30 Lunch Parmesan Cod, Pea Pods, Prince Charles Vegetables, Banana
15 CLOSED FOR PRESIDENT'S DAY	16 11:30-12:30 Lunch Meatloaf, Mashed Potatoes, Brussels Sprouts, Orange, Cherry Pie 4:30-5:30p Dinner Mediterranean Chicken, Sweet Potato, Green Beans, Grapes	17 11:30a-12:30p Lunch Breaded Chicken Breast, Italian Blend Vegetables, Asparagus, Kiwi 4:30-5:30pm Dinner Lasagna, Mixed Vegetables, Apple, Breadstick	18 11:30a-12:30p Lunch Crispy Lemon Chicken, Mashed Potatoes, Peas, Orange 4:30-5:30pm Dinner Smothered Pork Chop, Broccoli & Cauliflower, Carrots, Banana	19 11:30-12:30 Lunch Potato Crunch Pollock, Redskin Potatoes, California Blend Vegetables, Apple
22 11:30-12:30 Lunch Beef Pot Roast, Redskin Potatoes, Mixed Vegetables, Kiwi	23 11:30-12:30 Lunch Swiss Steak, Mashed Potatoes, Italian Blend Vegetables, Grapes, Banana Bread 4:30-5:30pm Dinner Chicken Fettuccine Alfredo, Sugar Snap Peas, Broccoli, Banana	24 11:30a-12:30p Lunch Roast Turkey, Mashed Potatoes w/ Gravy, Peas & Onions, Pear 4:30-5:30pm Dinner Western Omelet, Redskin Potatoes, Broccoli & Cauliflower, Applesauce	25 11:30a-12:30p Lunch Beef Pot Pie, Mashed Potatoes, Brussels Sprouts, Orange 4:30-5:30pm Dinner Ravioli Squares, Italian Blend Vegetables, Corn, Grapes	26 11:30-12:30 Lunch Pepper Steak, Brown Rice, Stir Fry Vegetable, Asparagus, Apple

VOLUNTEERS show us your SUPERPOWER



Becoming a **Meals on Wheels Driver** is the perfect way to start your volunteer journey. Drop off lunch to those who are at home and unable to purchase or prepare their own meals, hear their story and leave with a new pep in your step!

(All drivers must be able to lift heavy bags, have valid driver's license, and have a clean reliable vehicle with current car insurance)

Contact Alice Snyder at (989) 348-7123 to sign up or to learn more about Meals on Wheels.



**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

It's Tax Season: Appointments Available

Tax and Home Heating Credit Appointments Available



Volunteers are available this year to assist with filing taxes and home heating credits. To qualify for a free appointment, your income cannot be over \$65,000.

The IRS has announced E-filing will be delayed until February 12th. Tax preparations appointments will be on Monday and Tuesday each week beginning February 15th and ending April 13th.

You **must** bring your Social Security Cards and Picture ID for yourself and each person you are claiming on your tax return. Your appointment cannot be conducted without your Social Security Card and/or ID. See below for a complete list of what to bring to your appointment:

- If your spouse cannot attend then you **MUST have a release form** filled out (forms are available from the Senior Center or the community building where the taxes are prepared)
- Picture ID(s); Driver's License for everyone
- Social Security Card(s) for you and your spouse and dependents
- Birthdates for spouses and dependents
- If one of your dependents is in school, bring a Report Card or some document showing they are attending school

- Copy of **last year's tax return**
- **Any Income**, W2's, Tips, Gambling Winnings, Your Social Security Statement SSA-1099, Railroad Retirement RRB-1099, Interest 1099-INT, Dividends 1099-DIV, Stock Sales 1099B, Retirement, Annuity, IRA Distributions 1099-R, Unemployment Compensation 1099-G, Any Other Income Documentation, 1099-MISC, FIA/FIP Obtain DHS Statement, SSI Fed/State Bank Statement
- Daycare total amount paid, providers ID number or SS number
- Mortgage Interest Statement
- Charitable donations up to \$300 if you do not itemize **NEW THIS YEAR**
- A Copy of Your Property Tax Bills For Last Year: Summer And Winter Taxes
- Renters May also for a Homestead Property Tax Credit.
- Your Heating Costs From November 1, 2019 Thru October 31, 2020 (Renters May Qualify Even If Heat Is Included In Rent) for **Home Heating Credit**
- For Direct Deposit: Bank Routing And Account Number (or bring a blank check)
- Amount you paid in **Medical Insurance** including that portion of your **Auto Insurance**
- Your property tax bills for last year: summer and winter tax for **Homestead Property Tax Credit** (renters may also qualify need property owners name and address)

To schedule an appointment, please call the Commission on Aging & Senior Center at (989) 348-7123.

PLEASE NOTE: Appointments are available on a first come, first served basis until full.



The Cares Act Of 2020

Every person should have gotten a stimulus for \$1200. If you did not get one, contact Tammy Findlay at the COA 348-7123.

The Cares Act will allow filers to claim up to \$300 in charitable contributions without itemizing. If you itemize you can only deduct the charitable contributions within Schedule A Itemized Deductions.



Free Equipment

The Crawford county Commission on Aging has 3 bedside commodes available. They can be used as stand-alone or placed over your home toilet. The commodes are equipped with arms to make it easier to go from a sitting to standing position.

Also available are walkers with or without wheels. They are foldable, making it easier to take with you when traveling in an automobile.

All equipment is **FREE** and are on a first-come, first-served basis for Crawford County residents age 60 and over. If interested please give Kathy a call at (989) 348-7123.



As we continue to maneuver through this difficult time and as some of our classes are on hold I have compiled a list of resources to help you stay active.

It is recommended older adults engage in moderate exercise for at least 30 minutes five days a week. It is also recommended to engage in moderate strength-training activities two or more days a week. The following resources are free and easy to access with internet connection.

Tai Chi is one of the most effective exercises for health of mind and body. It consists of gentle movements that are relaxed and slow in tempo. Tai Chi can be performed standing or seated. Visit the link to view a video on Tai Chi for Rehabilitation: <https://tinyurl.com/TaiChiRehab>

Go4Life is an exercise and physical activity campaign from the National Institute on Aging at the National Institutes of Health (NIH), that is designed to help older adults fit exercise and physical activity into daily life. Visit the link to view an exercise video created by the National Institute on Aging: <https://tinyurl.com/Go4LifeExercises>

PBS/WCMU offers two exercise classes during the week: one at 2pm and another at 2:30pm Eastern Time. Classical Stretch is an all-standing workout that tones and strengthens muscles throughout the body and is held at 2pm during the week on the PBS station. Sit and be Fit is offered at 2:30pm during the week and aims to improve posture and balance. Visit the link below to view the channel schedule: <https://tinyurl.com/pbsfitness>

Come visit us!

- Independent Living
- Assisted Living
- Memory & Specialized Care
- Respite & Short Term Care

A Non-Profit Faith-Based Organization

NorthernPinesAssistedLiving.org
130 Mary Ann Street • Grayling 49738
p: (989)344-2010 • f: (989) 344-2011

Assistance to Help You Maintain Your Independence

COMMISSION ON AGING SERVICES, CLASSES & RESOURCES

Health Services

Blood Pressure & Sugar Checks

by Munson Home Health Care

- Tuesdays, 4:30-5:30pm

by InTeliCare - Friday, 11:00am-12:30pm

Foot Care Clinic - by appointment

\$25 per visit with punch card (6 visits—\$150)

or **\$30 per visit** - by Comfort Keepers

1st Thursday, 11:30-6pm

Hearing Clinic - by appointment

by Advantage Audiology

Contact the COA office to set up an appt.

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.

Commodities Food Distribution

Monthly, 9:30-10:30am @ St. Mary's

Congregate Meal Program

Lunch is provided Mon-Fri from 11:30am - 12:30pm and Dinner is provided from 4:30pm - 5:30pm Tues. -Thurs. Suggested donation for seniors 60+ is \$3.50 and for those under 60, \$6.00 cost.

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 \$20 worth of coupons for fresh fruits & vegetables.

T.E.F.A.P. Food Distribution

Quarterly @ American Legion Hall 1-2:30pm
May, August, November

Resources

Computers

Internet, computers, and printers are available at the Senior Center for you to use Mon 8:30-4, Tues 8:30-7pm, Wed & Thurs 8:30-6, and Fri 8:30-4pm

Information and Assistance

Our 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 1-4pm

Medicaid/Medicare Assistance Program (MMAP)

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

Medical Transportation

We can assist in arranging transportation for seniors who have no other means.

Resource Center

Bookcase of loan materials, both videos and books.

Senior Gazette

A monthly Senior Gazette which is full of information for seniors and their caregivers.

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.

Cooking for One

Cooking for one teaches helpful tips to making healthy choices and ways to make cooking for one simple and enjoyable.

Matter of Balance Program

This program offers practical strategies to reduce falls.

PATH (Personal Action Toward Health)

PATH is designed to benefit adults with chronic or long-term health conditions including arthritis, heart disease, diabetes, emphysema, asthma, bronchitis and depression.

Powerful Tools for Caregivers

A class for Family Caregivers. This program will provide you with tools and strategies to better handle the unique caregiver challenges you face.

Stress Less with Mindfulness

Stress Less is a class teaching people a particular way of thinking to help reduce stress, depression, and anxiety.

Tai Chi

Tai Chi includes movements that are relaxed and slow in tempo that can improve balance, strength, and increase flexibility. Each class includes a warm-up, followed by one or two movements per lesson, and a cool-down.

Walk with Ease

Walk with Ease is an evidence-based program that includes safe walking to help reduce and prevent many different types of chronic pain.

Wellness Initiative for Senior Education

WISE is a program for adults aged 60 and older looking to stay healthy and meet new people. WISE's interactive lessons are designed to provide valuable education on topics including health and wellness, medication use, stress management, depression and substance use.

Cost for Services

Almost all of the services offered are available on a suggested donation basis to Crawford County residents. Our programs are funded by Crawford County millage taxes along with Federal, State, and local grants. General donations and donations to a specific program are always needed and welcome.



Commission on Aging
& Senior Center

**How We
Served You
in Dec 2020!**

At the Senior Center

- We served **520** Congregate Meals

In-Home Services

- Delivered **2,825** home delivered meals.
- Provided **102.5** hours of respite care.
- We provided **357** hours of homemaker services.
- We provided **70** hours of bathing assistance services.



**Tune into the Community Calendar for our Calendar of Events
aired daily on all the Blarney Stone Broadcasting Stations or go
to q100-fm.com, north-fm.com, upnorthsportsradio.com,
or email calendar@blarneystonebroadcasting.com**



SOCIAL SECURITY TIPS

From Bob Simpson, District Manager Traverse City Social Security Office

Social Security Spouses' Benefits Explained

Understanding how your future retirement might affect your spouse is important. Here are a few things to remember when you're planning for your retirement. Your spouse's benefit amount could be up to 50 percent of your full retirement age benefit amount. If you qualify for a benefit from your own work history and a spouse's record, we always pay your own benefit first. You cannot receive spouse's benefits unless your spouse is receiving their retirement benefits (except for divorced spouses).



first, your survivor benefit will be reduced, but may be higher than what your spouse received.

If your deceased spouse started receiving reduced retirement benefits before their full retirement age, a special rule called the retirement insurance benefit limit may apply to you. The retirement insurance benefit limit is the maximum survivor benefit you may receive. Generally, the limit is the higher of:

The reduced monthly retirement benefit the deceased spouse

If you took your reduced retirement first while waiting for your spouse to reach retirement age, your own retirement portion remains reduced. When you add spouse's benefits later, the total retirement and spouses benefit together will total less than 50 percent of the worker's amount. You can find out more about this at www.ssa.gov/OACT/quickcalc/spouse.html.

If your spouse's retirement benefit is higher than your retirement benefit, and he or she chooses to take reduced benefits and dies

would have been entitled to if they had lived, or

82.5 percent of the unreduced deceased spouse's monthly benefit if they had started receiving benefits at their full retirement age (rather than choosing to receive a reduced retirement benefit early).

Knowing about these benefits can help you plan your financial future. Access a wealth of useful information and use our benefits planners at www.ssa.gov/benefits/retirement.

Understand Your Medicare Costs in 2021

Part A costs: Medicare Part A covers inpatient hospital services, skilled nursing facility services, home health care, and hospice. Most people do not owe a premium for Part A. However, if you or your spouse worked less than 10 years, you may owe a monthly premium of either \$259 or \$471 per month in 2021, depending on the number of years worked. If you become a hospital inpatient, you will owe a deductible of \$1,484. If you have multiple hospitalizations, you may pay toward the deductible more than once until it reaches \$1,484. After you meet your deductible, your first 60 days in the hospital cost \$0 per day. If you are hospitalized more than 60 days, you may owe an out-of-pocket cost for continued days as a hospital inpatient. If you are admitted to a skilled nursing facility, the first 20 days are 100% covered by Medicare. You will then owe \$185.50 a day for days 21 – 100 in 2021.

Part B costs: Medicare Part B covers outpatient costs, such as doctor visits and outpatient procedures. In 2021, the standard Part B premium is \$148.50 for people with a yearly income equal to or below \$88,000 as a single person or \$176,000 for a married couple. If your income is higher than that, you may pay a higher premium. If you have Original Medicare, you will owe a Part B deductible of \$203 in 2021. You will continue to owe a 20% coinsurance for most services covered by Part B.

Contact Tammy Findlay, Michigan Medicare/Medicaid Assistance Program Specialist at the Crawford County Commission on Aging for more details or to discuss your Medicare costs. Tammy is available each morning at (989) 348-7123.

New to Medicare Seminar

Are you turning age 65 in 2021? 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 via Zoom on **Wednesday, February 24th at 10am** for a presentation that will help demystify the issues surrounding Medicare.

Advocacy & Resource Coordinator, Tammy Findlay 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 or to get the Zoom link email Tammy at tfindlay@crawfordcoa.org or call (989) 348-7123.



Emergency Preparedness Series

The Michigan State University Extension is hosting a series of Zoom courses to discuss being food safe and ready for emergencies or severe weather. See below for information about courses happening this month:

- **Emergency Preparedness for Seniors**—February 5: Simple tips to stay healthy and safe in food emergencies.
- **Preparing Youth for Emergencies**—February 16: Preparing youth to recognize and take action during emergencies.

Visit <https://tinyurl.com/msupprepare/> or contact Karen Fifield at fifield@msu.edu to register or to learn more about the program.



Thank You

A big *Thank You* to all the Grayling Middle School Teachers for their Christmas gifts. We appreciate you taking care of our older adults and keeping them warm for the winter with your generous donation of socks.

Random Word Search Puzzle

At this time we will not be giving out prizes and will not be collecting puzzles.
We may resume when the Senior Center reopens for activities.

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

1. alexia
2. bemusedly
3. blacktail
4. brackishness
5. briquetting
6. caducous
7. crabbedly
8. dcor
9. decrescent
10. distributive
11. downtowner
12. elastance
13. elegance
14. filing
15. flavorful
16. hypomnesia
17. ickiest
18. immoveables
19. interbank
20. interstate
21. japan
22. jargon
23. laparotomize
24. lorestan
25. malacotic
26. maleate
27. mercery
28. myoneuralgia
29. orthoptic
30. pasta
31. proestrus
32. pterylogy
33. puerperium
34. pulpital
35. quantity
36. recitation
37. relativist
38. rotative
39. selinsgrove
40. solvableated
41. stoneworker
42. suggestion
43. teapoy
44. tumbes
45. underthief
46. unmodified
47. unmollified
48. unrevoked
49. voivodina
50. wauk

Cook's Corner Small-Portion Meatloaf Serves 2-3



INGREDIENTS

- 1/2 pound of ground beef
- 1/4 cup of cooked brown rice or dry oats or crushed whole wheat crackers or bread crumbs
- 1 egg
- 1/4 cup veggies, any combination of onions, green peppers, carrots, etc.
- 2 tablespoons brown sugar (cane sugar, white granulated sugar or honey)
- 2 tablespoons vinegar (can use white, red or cider)
- 2 tablespoons catsup
- 1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce or low sodium soy sauce

DIRECTIONS

- 1) Combine beef, rice/oats/cracker/crumbs, egg, and veggies for the meat mixture.
- 2) Divide meat mixture into two to three custard cups or into 2-3 wells of a muffin tin.
- 3) Whisk together brown sugar, vinegar, catsup, and Worcestershire sauce. Pour sauce mixture over meat.
- 4) Bake in oven for 45 minutes at 350 degrees Fahrenheit.

Notes: In the event this recipe yields too much food for your family this recipe freezes well in a well-sealed container.

*Recipe by Michelle Gordon-Releford,
Michigan State University Extension*

To submit your recipe for the Cook's Corner please email svanduser@crawfordcoa.org or mail a copy to our offices!

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Pepsi Products 2 Liters 79¢ Plus Deposit

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Limit 2 Please with coupon

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Look for printable coupons at www.Save-A-Lot.com

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www.advantagehearingonline.com

Gaylord Office
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P: 989-448-2500

Grayling Office
2375 Bus. Loop 1-75
P: 989-745-6667

Sleep Well for Better Health

By Nicole Persing-Wethington, from Michigan State University Extension

Sleep is vital to our health. Many older adults report issues with sleep that reduce quality of life. We have a variety of functions occurring during sleep; muscle repair, retaining new memories, and much more. Lack of sleep can contribute to poor health outcomes, especially with chronic conditions and healing. It is recommended for older adults to get 7-8 hours of sleep per night.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Michigan ranks 47th out of 50 in terms of adult sleep. There are changes to our behavior and environment that can help us get better sleep.

- Keep a regular schedule: Inconsistent schedules contribute to poor sleep. This can happen with varying work schedules, a book that was so interesting that we lost track of time, or simply having an off day. Keeping a regular bedtime and wake-up time can iron out a variety of sleep challenges. Try setting an alarm to help you



remember your chosen routine. Remember to keep this routine all week long, even weekends, for the best results.

- Engage in physical activity: studies show that regular exercise can help quality and duration of sleep. Avoid vigorous physical activity immediately before bed but try an exercise program during the day. This can be walking, Tai Chi, a strength program, or any physical activity you enjoy.
- Check your lights: light, even as dim as a small lamp, has been shown to impact sleep. Try looking at your sleep environment with fresh eyes.

Power cords, power lights on devices, and other electronics can emit light. Try dimming lights an hour before bed to help your body prepare for sleep.

If you are interested in learning more, consider registering for MSU Extension's new SLEEP: Sleep Education for Everyone Program. Registration: <https://events.anr.msu.edu/sleepmar4/>



Stress Less with Mindfulness

The Michigan State University Extension will be offering Stress Less with Mindfulness FREE Monday through Friday, February 8th-12th at 10am via Zoom.

Stress Less With Mindfulness introduces participants to the experience and practice of mindfulness, with a goal of reducing stress. Mindfulness can be defined as paying attention in a particular way; on purpose, in the present moment and non-judgmentally. Research has shown that practicing mindfulness is effective in reducing stress-related symptoms such as worry, depression and physical tension, and may be helpful in managing chronic conditions. The program covers mindful breathing, mindful eating, physical processes in the brain and body and mindful laughter.

Registration is required. To register visit <https://events.anr.msu.edu/slmfeb8to12/>. Instructions on Zoom software and setup will be sent in the confirmation email.



RELAX: Alternatives to Anger

The Michigan State University Extension will be offering RELAX: Alternatives to Anger FREE Tuesday-Friday, February 16th-19th, from 10am-11am via Zoom.

How individuals handle their anger and stress affects the people around them. Alternatives to Anger is a four-part educational series designed to help adults, parents and caregivers increase their knowledge about anger issues and put anger management and healthy relationship skills into practice. Through presentations, group discussion and skill-building activities, participants learn what anger is, what triggers anger, calming down and de-stressing methods, the principles of problem solving, effective communication skills and forgiving and letting go of the past.

Registration is required. Register online by visiting <https://events.anr.msu.edu/relaxfeb16/>. Registration closes at 11:59 p.m. on February 15, 2021.

Medicare Advantage Open Enrollment ends March 31

If you're unhappy with your Medicare Advantage Plan (Medicare Part C), you have options? Each year, there's a Medicare Advantage Open Enrollment Period from January 1–March 31. During this time, if you're in a Medicare Advantage Plan and want to change your health plan, you can switch to a different Medicare Advantage Plan with or without drug coverage, go back to Original Medicare and, if needed, or join a Medicare Prescription Drug Plan.

If you switch Medicare Advantage Plans or go back to Original Medicare with or without a Medicare drug plan, your new coverage will start the first day of the month after your new plan gets your request for coverage. Keep in mind, if you go back to Original Medicare now, you may not be able to buy a Medicare Supplement Insurance (Medigap) policy.

The Medicare Advantage Open Enrollment Period isn't for people who already have Original Medicare.

It's important to understand and be confident in your Medicare coverage choices. If you have a Medicare Advantage Plan and want to change your plan, check out your options today.

Grayling Hospital for Animals



- Dr. Paul W. Mesack
- Dr. Troy Fairbanks
- Dr. Katherine Powning
- Dr. Barbara Craig
- Dr. Heather Minkel

5806 W. M-72 Grayling, MI 49738
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2020 at the Crawford County Commission on Aging

Feature Reviews

"The Home Delivered Meal Program gives me the ability to stay in my own apartment and my doctor says all my blood levels are within the normal range." She can't believe it... and it is because of the meals! "Without the meals I would not be able to eat, maybe only one meal a day, with all my prescription costs. The volunteers that bring my home delivered meals are always upbeat, dolly, and really lift my mental health."

"Our seniors play a significant role in our County and I am grateful for the services you provide them. My Mother & Grandmother both loved and enjoyed your services and I want to make a continual effort to see this continue. Your staff is to be commended on the fine job they do. Thanks for your service."

"Just wanted to let you know that I love the Hearing Clinic. Was told \$7,000 for my needs but with your clinic everything is covered and my life is going to change."

"I am very thankful for the Home Delivered Meal Program. Many times I would not have a warm meal if it wasn't for the program. Because of the program I have a warm meal every day. I thank all the volunteers for their kindness and hope they stay safe."

"Six months after my husband was diagnosed with dementia, I was becoming 'down in the dumps.' I was trying to do everything at home! Cooking, cleaning, grocery shopping, picking up meds, remembering and dispensing medications to give to my husband, picking up mail at the post office, and all the driving—taking my husband to and from doctor's appointments, etc. My daughter came from Florida and noticed my depression. She said let's go to the COA and see if you can get some help. I now receive Meals on Wheels, cleaning services, and they helped me receive free vegetables in summer, and their paper gives me news of upcoming events! The next time my daughter called me from Florida she said, 'It sounds like you're very happy!'"

"I am very excited that since receiving my meals I have been eating balanced, portion controlled lunches and I have lost 30 lbs. to date. I am no longer pre-diabetic—my doctor is amazed at my lab results this quarter. All in all, I'm more aware of what and how much I am eating as well as how often. Thank you so much for bringing me my lunches."

"The Crawford County Senior Center is absolutely amazing. I am in constant awe of the varied and many programs you offer. The special services are so relevant and necessary. When I moved to Grayling eight years ago friends and family pondered what I was going to do up here. But this Center is a

fount of information, social activities, excellent food, group outings, recreational activities. The staff here has never failed to be pleasant, informative, and helpful. This Center is Grayling's best kept secret. I applaud you!"

"I've been on Meals on Wheels and telephone reassurance for about a year now! They are nice—I look forward to my deliveries, not so much for the meals, but they're good and very helpful, but because of the volunteers. They're wonderful. They talked to me and seem to care when nobody else does! They are super. My reassurance calls make my day also. Our COA cares about us who are homebound. The volunteers take that extra few minutes to let us know that they care and even worry about us. When I'm feeling sick or just don't feel good those wonderful calls make me smile no matter how lonely I am feeling!"

Highlights



New Building Millage Bond

Passed: With the passage of the \$3 million voter approved bond, the Crawford County Commission on Aging embarked on a journey to create a new home. Even though our building project was put on hold for several months when the pandemic broke out, the project continues to move forward. The purchase of a 12,000sf existing building located at 4388 M-72 East occurred shortly after the vote. In the spring, a Project Team of Senior Center design specialists, architects, engineers and interior designers was procured. Design Development for the remodel of the existing building and an 8,200sf expansion has occupied much of our time. A presentation of the design can be found on our website located at www.crawfordcoa.org. We look forward to starting construction in 2021 with final complementation by the end of the year.

New! Friendly Visitor

Program: It became significantly evident that some of our older adults were lonely. We know that living in beautiful northern Michigan can sometimes be isolating. With this in mind, we were able to recruit 6 volunteers to spend time with 10 of our older adults in Crawford County who could use someone to talk to on a regular, weekly basis. Our volunteers have provided a listening ear, a friendly, positive voice and have followed their clients into the

nursing home or hospital until they return home giving them someone to talk with through their life's journey.



Record Meal on Wheels

Deliveries: The need for Meals on Wheels surged this past year. Crawford County older adults experienced being homebound and isolated at its peak. Our volunteer drivers touched many lives. We served 184 older adults home delivered meals, compared to the previous year of 147, serving 25% additional Crawford County residents. This was evident in the increased meals that we prepared and delivered to homebound residents. The Commission on Aging prepared and delivered a total of 36,948 meals this past year. This is an increase of 11,830 meals from the previous year which totaled 25,118. This equates to a 47% increase! Staff members and volunteers made a positive impact on many homebound older adults this last year when socialization was limited to our most vulnerable adults.



Services Continue During

Pandemic: Another group of heroes in our story this year are our dedicated group of Homemaker staff. Cleaning homes and providing bathing assistance is a tough job in normal circumstances. Try doing it all dressed up in Personal Protective Equipment! Our staff showed up despite all the difficulties and took care of our older adults in the community who need that extra support to remain independent at home. Hats off to you – Erika, Ann, Kathy, Sarah and Laken!

Year in Review—By the Numbers

Over the past year, the Commission On Aging & Senior Center, through its programs and services, served 31% (1,247 individuals) of Crawford County seniors age 60 and above (based on 2010 census).

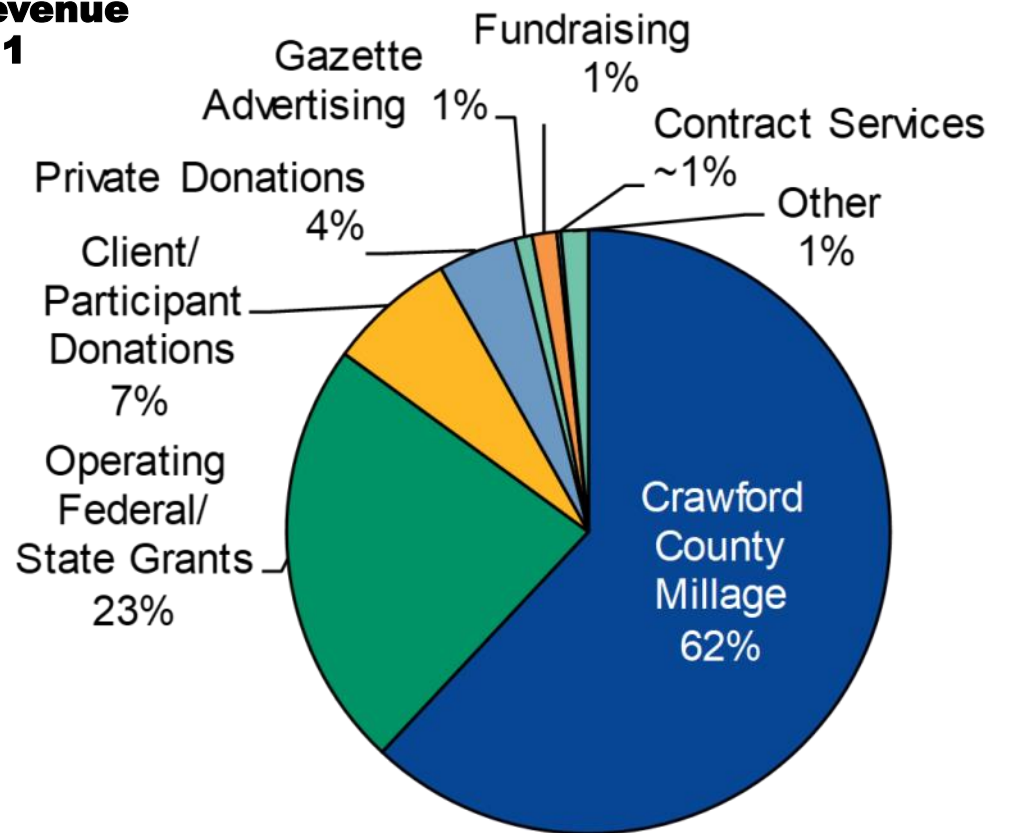
Senior Center Activities

- 45 activities offered & attended by 630 unduplicated people.
- Average monthly attendance = 915 (pre-coronavirus)
- Average daily visitors = 63 (pre-coronavirus)

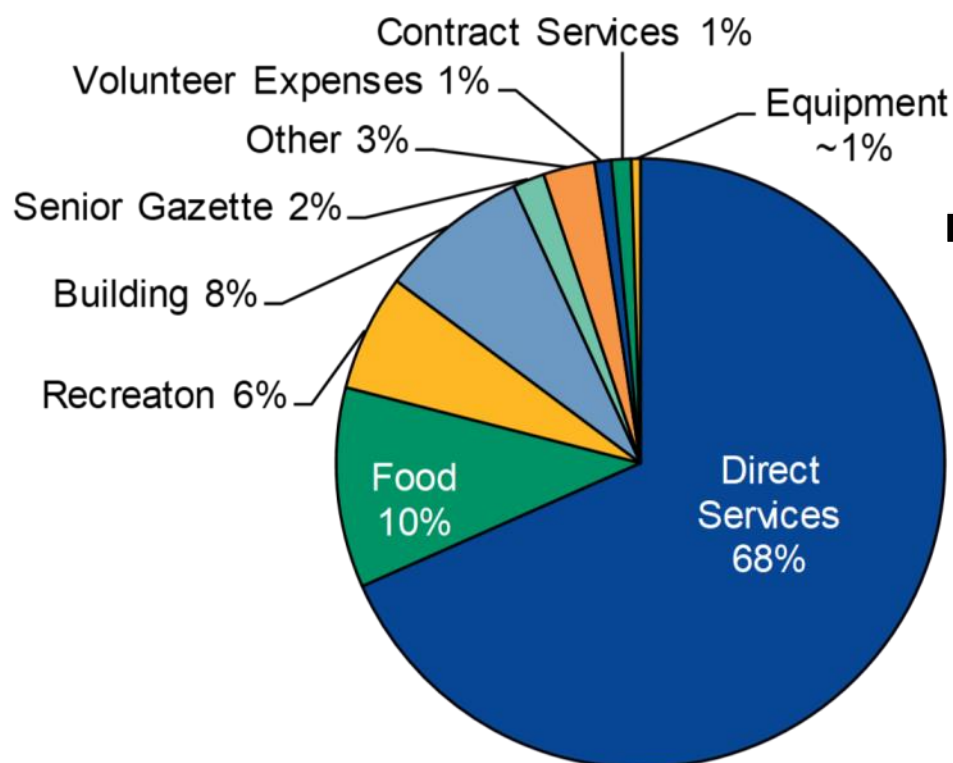
Commission on Aging Programs

- 315 boxes of Food Commodities were delivered to 45 people.
- 362.50 hours were spent counseling 248 seniors with their Medicaid and Medicare benefits.
- 200 seniors received "Senior Project Fresh" farm market coupons.
- 47 loans of medical equipment.
- 349 people received assistance thru our Advocacy services.
- 60 Medical Transports were provided to 17 individuals.

Total Revenue \$987,211



Total Expenditures \$935,841

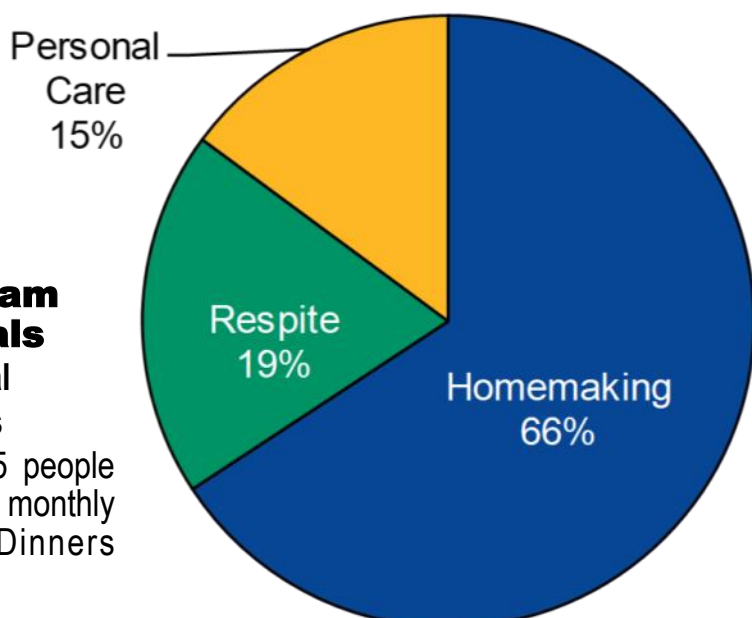


Meal Program 45,290 Meals

~ \$5.91 per Meal

729 Individuals

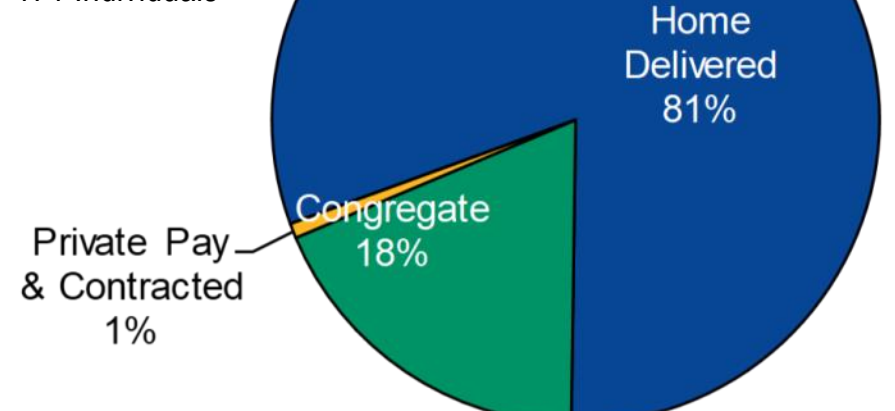
On average 165 people attended the monthly Community Dinners before COVID.



In-Home Services 7,112 Hours

~\$33.52 per Hour

171 Individuals





Mitten Minds Dementia Series

The University of Michigan Alzheimer's Disease Center is offering a free educational series for people recently diagnosed with dementia or Alzheimer's. A loved-one may also join in on these education sessions.

The class will run Tuesdays, 10am to 12pm, from March 9th through April 13th via Zoom. Each session will be presented by an expert in the field of dementia care and research and facilitated by Ashley Miller, MPH.

The goal of the series is to provide important information to individuals who have been recently diagnosed, provide a space for questions to be answered, and to connect to other resources and support services available. Presentation topics include

- Memory Loss 101
- Physical Health
- Mental Health
- Planning for your Future

Registration is Required. To register visit <https://alzheimers.med.umich.edu/mitten-minds-education-series/>. Once you register, a staff member will contact you to set up an initial meeting before the series.



Don't Suffer in the Cold this Winter!

There are multiple options to help you keep power and utilities during the winter months if you are having financial trouble.

The Winter Protection Plan (WPP) protects seniors (65+) and low-income customers from disconnection and high energy bill payments in the winter months (Nov 1-March 31). Seniors participating in the program are not required to make payments throughout the heating season but must pay off any money owed from the protection period between April and November. For more information or to apply, call MGU at 800-401-6402.

Emergency Utility Assistance is another program which provides deliverable fuels (propane, fuel oil, and firewood) as well as metered utilities (electric and natural gas). To qualify for this assistance you must meet one of the emergency guidelines and income guidelines. Funds are available from both DHHS and NEMCSA.

For Crawford County residents 60+ needing assistance with these applications, call Tammy Findlay at (989) 348-7123.



Upcoming Evidence- Based Classes

Our Community Partners are offering a number of online, evidence-based classes regarding health and wellness in the upcoming months. Registration is required. To register or to learn more about the classes simply visit the links below.

- **Wellness Initiative for Senior Education (WISE) Program:**
Wednesdays, Feb 3–March 10
<https://events.anr.msu.edu/wisefeb2021/>
- **Powerful Tools for Caregivers:**
Wednesdays, Feb 10-Mar 17
https://4ami.org/uploads/files/Powerful_Tools_CoBranded.pdf
- **Cancer PATH:** Fridays, Feb 19-Mar 26
https://4ami.org/uploads/files/Cancer_PATH_2021.pdf
- **Chronic Pain PATH:**
Mondays, Feb 22-Mar 29
https://4ami.org/uploads/files/Chronic_Pain_PATH_CoBranded.pdf
- **Diabetes PATH:**
Mondays, Feb 22-Mar 29
https://4ami.org/uploads/files/Diabetes_PATH_CoBranded.pdf
- **A Matter of Balance:**
March 1–March 24 (Tentative)
<https://www.nemcsa.org/services/senior-services/a-matter-of-balance.html>
- **Powerful Tools for Caregivers:**
Mondays, Mar 1-Apr 5
https://4ami.org/uploads/files/Powerful_Tools_CoBranded.pdf
- **Powerful Tools for Caregivers:**
Tuesdays, Mar 2-Apr 6
<https://www.nemcsa.org/services/senior-services/powerful-tools-for-caregivers.html>
- **A Matter of Balance:**
Tues & Thurs, Mar 2– Mar 25
https://4ami.org/uploads/files/Matter_of_Balance_CoBranded.pdf
- **Developing Dementia Dexterity:**
Wednesdays, Mar 3-Mar 17
https://4ami.org/uploads/files/Developing_Dementia_Dexterity_CoBranded.pdf
- **Diabetes PATH:**
Fridays, Mar 12-Apr 16
https://4ami.org/uploads/files/Diabetes_PATH_CoBranded.pdf
- **Chronic Pain PATH:**
Mondays, Mar 29-May 3
https://4ami.org/uploads/files/Chronic_Pain_PATH_CoBranded.pdf

Don't Risk It – Call 911.

Emergencies can't wait.

Medical emergencies can be far more dangerous than COVID-19. If you are experiencing emergency-like symptoms, call **911**. The safest place you can be during an emergency is your local Munson Healthcare hospital.



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