

April 2026

Senior Services Newsletter

Western Prairie Human Services

211 E Minnesota Ave, Glenwood MN | 320-634-7755 | www.wphsmn.gov
15 Central Ave N. Elbow Lake MN | 218-685-8200 | senior.services@wphsmn.gov
202 8th Street N. Wheaton MN | 320-422-7777 | 1-800-291-2827



Coffee with a Cop & Back – Up Grant County

Monday April 13, 1:30pm

Peace Lutheran Church,
Barrett MN – Emergency
Preparedness Month

Tuesday May 12, 1pm

Ashby Senior Center
Terri Swenson – Senior Life
Solutions, Medu

Coffee with a Cop Pope County

Saturday April 11, 9am

Pope County Community
Expo - Minnewaska Area
High School

Coffee & Connections – for Family Caregivers

Hoffman, Senior Center
100 3rd St S.

4th Tues of the Month 10am

Glenwood, Western Prairie
Human Services

211 E Minnesota Ave
2nd Thurs of the month 2pm
4th Tues of the month 2pm

Wheaton, Wheaton Hospital,
Board Room
401 12th St N.

3rd Mon of the month 1:30pm

Virtual

2nd Tuesday of the Month
5:30pm

For details of online meeting
and other questions, call
320-424-0018 or email
senior.services@wphsmn.gov

Peace of Mind Starts With a Plan

As spring settles in, life begins to pick up again. Appointments fill the calendar, families gather, and the days move a little faster. It's also the perfect time to pause and ask an important question:

Am I prepared for what matters most?

Being prepared isn't about expecting the worst — it's about creating peace of mind for yourself and the people who care about you.

Protecting Yourself in a Changing World

Scams are becoming more advanced, especially with the use of artificial intelligence. Voices can be mimicked. Messages can sound convincing. Even the most cautious individuals can be caught off guard.

Taking time to learn what to watch for — and talking about it with family — is one of the best ways to stay protected.

Protecting Your Home

Safety at home is something many of us take for granted. A simple check of smoke detectors, clear exits, and updated emergency plans can make all the difference.

For families supporting someone living with dementia, these steps are especially important, as changes in the brain can affect awareness of danger.

Protecting Your Wishes

Planning ahead — including wills, advance directives, and estate planning — is one of the greatest gifts you can give your family.

These conversations are not always easy, but they ensure that your wishes are known and respected. They also reduce stress and uncertainty for loved ones during difficult times.

A Season to Take the Next Step

Confidence comes from knowing you have taken steps to prepare — not just for yourself, but for those who depend on you.

Take the first step toward peace of mind by joining us at the Senior Expo on April 23. See back page for details.

When Safety Feels Different: Understanding Dementia and Awareness

Safety means something different when dementia is involved.

For many caregivers, there comes a moment that is both confusing and concerning — a loved one does not react to something that clearly signals danger. A smoke alarm sounds, and there is no response. Flames at the edge of vision may go unnoticed, smoke may not be detected, and other warning signs can feel invisible. The situation may seem unsafe, but they appear calm.

Even the smallest changes at home can make a meaningful difference in keeping a lo

Dementia affects the parts of the brain responsible for judgment, reasoning, and awareness. Over time, a person may lose the ability to recognize danger or understand what a warning sign means. At the same time, their internal sense of safety may change. They may feel safe when they are not — or anxious when there is no clear threat.

This is not a choice. It is a change in the brain.

Because of this, caregivers often carry an increased responsibility for safety. Spring is a good time to quietly reassess:

- Are smoke detectors working and loud enough?
- Are pathways clear and easy to navigate?
- Are exits simple and accessible?
- Is there a plan if an emergency happens?

Just as important is how we respond in the moment. - If a person does not react to danger, we may feel urgency rise quickly. Taking a brief pause, using a calm tone, and offering simple direction can help guide them without increasing fear.

“You’re safe. Let’s go this way.”

Reassurance, not explanation, is often what is needed most.

Caregiving is not just about meeting physical needs — it is about creating a sense of safety when the brain can no longer do that on its own.

You are providing that safety every day, often in ways that go unseen.

On This Date....

April 1st is April Fools Day also known as April Fish Day in parts of Europe. In Italy and France, a common prank is to attach a paper fish to someone’s back, a tradition widely believed to date back to the 16th century and still enjoyed today.

April 7th is No Housework Day, a chance to take a break from chores. It encourages people to set aside laundry, cleaning, and to-do lists for any day. The spirit of the holiday is simple – permission to rest without worrying about housework

April 19th, 1963 – Johnny Cash released “Ring of Fire,” written by June Carter and Merle Kilgore, which instantly became one of his defining hits. The song shot to the top of the charts and stayed there for seven weeks.

April 22, 1970 – The first Earth Day was celebrated by an estimated 20 million people, who joined rallies and other community events across the country to spotlight concerns about pollution and environmental degradation.

April 30th, 1952 – Mr. Potato Head became the first toy ever to be advertised on television, marking a seismic shift in how products were marketed. Instead of speaking to parents, the commercial spoke directly to children about all the fun they could have affixing the 30 plastic accessories – including hands, hats, and feet – to a real potato (not included). In 1964 it began including a plastic potato body in the kit. In 1975, the toy was redesigned with larger plastic pieces to meet child safety regulations

Five Myths About Advance Care Planning

Get the facts about these common advance care planning myths.

Myth

I only need a plan if I'm very old or ill.



Fact

It's impossible to predict the future. An emergency can happen at any age. Creating a plan now helps ensure that someone you trust can make decisions that reflect your wishes.

Myth

My loved ones will know what I want when the time comes.



Fact

Not necessarily. In one study, nearly 1 in 3 people guessed wrong when asked to predict which end-of-life decisions their loved one would make.

Myth

I need a lawyer to create an advance care plan.



Fact

Most states offer free advance directive forms online, and you do not have to involve a lawyer.

Myth

Once I put my plans in writing, I can't change them.



Fact

Your advance directives can be changed at any time. In fact, you should review your plans at least once a year and after any major life event like a move, divorce, or change in your health.

Myth

An advance care plan only matters if I put it in writing.



Fact

The most important part of planning is discussing your wishes with your loved ones. It can save them from worrying about whether they made the right decisions for you.

Ready to get started?

Visit www.nia.nih.gov/acp



WACKY WORDIES

Each of the puzzles below provides a visual representation of a common word or phrase. Can you decipher the clues in each box?

<p>All naught naught naught naught</p> <p>1. _____</p>	<p>POPIGKE</p> <p>2. _____</p>	<p>Playing</p> <p>1. Keep 2. Keep 3. Keep 4. Keep</p> <p>3. _____</p>	<p>on the BURNER</p> <p>4. _____</p>
<p>KZUCZK</p> <p>5. _____</p>	<p>talk talk</p> <p>3. _____</p>	<p>working 12:16</p> <p>7. _____</p>	<p>LIE</p> <p>8. _____</p>
<p>COLLAR HOT</p> <p>9. _____</p>	<p>works me me me me</p> <p>10. _____</p>	<p>croalonedw</p> <p>11. _____</p>	<p>B TIME</p> <p>12. _____</p>

National Health Care Decisions Day

Each year on April 16, communities across the country recognize National Health Care Decisions Day (NHDD) – a day dedicated to encouraging adults of all ages to think about and document their future health care wishes.

While it may not always be an easy topic to consider, making decisions ahead of time about your medical care is one of the most important gifts you can give yourself and your loved ones.

What is National Health Care Decisions Day?

National Health Care Decisions Day is a nationwide initiative that inspires, educates, and empowers individuals to plan for future health care decisions. It emphasizes the importance of advance care planning—thinking about what matters most to you and ensuring your wishes are known and respected.

Why it Matters

Unexpected medical situations can happen at any time. Without clear guidance, family members may be left to make difficult decisions during moments of stress and uncertainty. Having a plan in place:

- Reduces confusion and conflict among loved ones
- Ensures your values and preferences are honored
- Provides peace of mind for both you and your family

What is a Health Care Directive?

A health care directive (sometimes called an advance directive) is a legal document that outlines your preferences for medical care if you are unable to speak for yourself. It may include:

- The types of treatments you do or do not want
- Your wishes regarding life-sustaining measures
- The name of a trusted person to make decisions on your behalf

Getting Started

Taking the first step doesn't have to be complicated. Consider:

- Reflecting on what quality of life means to you

- Talking with family members or close friends
- Choosing a health care agent you trust
- Completing a simple health care directive form

A Conversation Worth Having

This April 16, take a moment to start the conversation. It's a small step that can make a lasting difference.

You can also take action in person—stop by the Senior Services booth at the **Pope County Community Expo on Saturday, April 9**, at Minnewaska Area High School, or visit us at the **Senior Expo on Thursday, April 23**. Pick up a copy of a health care directive and a File of Life folder to help ensure your important information and wishes are clearly documented and easy to access when it matters most.



DEMENTIA ESSENTIALS

Guidance & Support for Families
Navigating Dementia



Ridgewood Villa
Senior Living Apartments
7 4th Ave. SE
Glenwood, Mn 56334

March 25, 2026 1-4pm
June 17, 2026 1-4pm
Sept. 23, 2026 1-4pm
Dec. 16, 2026 1-4pm



400 E. 1st St.
Morris, MN 56267

SANFORD
HEALTH

401 12th St. N.
Wheaton, MN 56296

Feb. 10, 2026 8-11am
May 14, 2026 4-7pm
Aug. 19, 2026 11-2pm
Nov. 16, 2026 1-4pm

Jan. 21, 2026 1-4pm
April 22, 2026 1-4pm
July 22, 2026 1-4pm
Oct. 21, 2026 1-4pm



1411 Highway 79 East
Elbow Lake, MN, 56531

March 12, 2026 1-4 pm
June 11, 2026 3-6pm
Sept. 10, 2026 12-3 pm
Dec. 10, 2026 9-12 pm

For more information, please call Diane 320-424-0018.

Concentration Puzzles

Use the visual clues in the puzzle to figure out what it says.

1	
2	
3	
4	

- | | |
|-----------------|-------------|
| APRIL FOOLS DAY | EASTER |
| ARBOR DAY | JELLY BEANS |
| ARIES | JOKES |
| BASEBALL | PASSOVER |
| BLOOMS | PINK MOON |
| CHICKS | RAINCOAT |
| DAISY | TAURUS |
| DIAMOND | TAX DAY |
| EARTH DAY | THUNDER |

Backyard Garden Pass It On

After answering each clue, use the last letter of the answer for the first letter of the next answer. The first answer is given.

- | | |
|---|-------|
| 1. Plant's main stalk | stem |
| 2. Blanket of leaves and compost | _____ |
| 3. Tool with a flat blade | _____ |
| 4. Purple vegetable | _____ |
| 5. Small hand shovel | _____ |
| 6. Flat plant part | _____ |
| 7. Blossom on a plant | _____ |
| 8. Underground plant part | _____ |
| 9. Lattice for climbing vines | _____ |
| 10. Large spade | _____ |
| 11. Fragrant tulip-shaped flower | _____ |
| 12. Sweet potato relative | _____ |
| 13. Cut the grass | _____ |
| 14. Garden wigglers | _____ |
| 15. Start of a plant, before it sprouts | _____ |
| 16. Make a hole | _____ |
| 17. Pungent bulb | _____ |
| 18. Crunchy orange vegetable | _____ |

Searching For April

The list of words can be found vertically, horizontally, forward and backward. Disregard spaces between words.

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



2026 Grant & Pope County TRIAD
SENIOR EXPO
EDUCATION & AWARENESS EVENT
 THURSDAY APRIL 23, 2026
 STARBUCK COMMUNITY CENTER

Free Meal for person's over 55
 Suggested donation of \$10.00 if younger than 55. Cookies & Coffee all day!

- 8:30 am - 9:15 am Registration & Vendor Booths
- 9:15 am - 1:15 pm Education & Awareness Sessions
- 1:15 pm - 2:00 pm Drawing for Cash & Door Prizes. Closing. Must be present to win.

Pre-Register for a chance to win one of 5 \$20 Cash Prizes! Must call by April 15 218-685-8207

BUS TRANSPORTATION AVAILABLE BY LUXURY LIMOUSINE FROM ELBOW LAKE AND HOFFMAN

7:30 AM: Departing from the Grant County Sheriff's Office, Elbow Lake
 7:50 AM: Departing from Casey's Gas Station, Hoffman
 Return service will be provided after the event.

Must register by calling 218-685-8207

Guest Speakers Include:

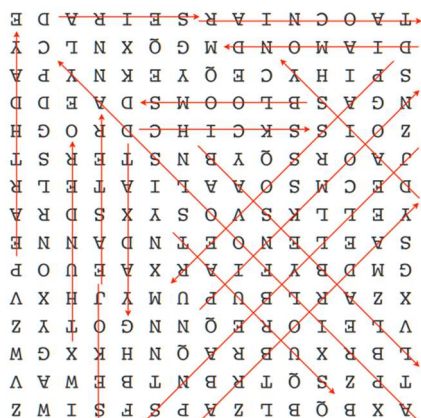
JAY HAAPALA,
 Associate State Director of Engagement, AARP
 Fraud losses are at an all-time high and are increasing year-over-year despite escalated attempts at prevention. This presentation will include a demonstration of how criminals use AI to target, automate, and scale up their scams.

DOUG JOHNSON
 Deputy State Fire Marshall, Minnesota Department of Public Safety
 Spring is a great time to review fire prevention strategies. Experts will discuss home safety checks, smoke detector maintenance, and what to do in an emergency.

MARIT PETERSON, JD
 Associate Director, Minnesota Elder Justice Center
 What happens to things when you die? This presentation will explore wills, estate planning, and probate and how these tools help to determine this.



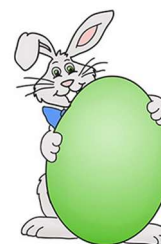
- Riddle Me This
1. An anchor
 2. I am the news
 3. Inkstand -
 4. A world record
 5. A match



- Wacky Words
1. All for naught
 2. A pig in a poke
 3. Playing for keeps
 4. On the back burner
 5. Knuckle down
 6. Double talk
 7. Working overtime
 8. White lie
 9. Hot under the collar
 10. Works for me
 11. Alone in the crowd
 12. Be on time

Riddle Me This

1. Come up and we go. Go down and we stay. What am I?
2. I can be written. I can be spoken. I can be exposed. I can be broken.
3. The word has kst in the middle, in the beginning, and at the end?
4. Break it and it gets better and hard to break again.
5. Take me out and scratch my head. I am now black but was once red.



1. Lily
2. yam
3. mow
4. worms
5. seed
6. dig
7. garlic
8. carrot

- Concentration Puzzles
1. Pick up you marbles and go home
 2. Stevie Wonder
 3. A cloud on the horizon
- Backyard Garden
- Pass it On
1. stem
 2. mulch
 3. hoe
 4. eggplant
 5. trowel
 6. leaf
 7. flower
 8. root
 9. trellis
 10. shovel
 11. lily
 12. yam
 13. mow
 14. worms
 15. seed
 16. dig
 17. garlic
 18. carrot