

May 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

Tuesday May 12, 1pm

Ashby Senior Center

Senior Life Solutions, Terri Swenson

Wednesday June 17

Hoffman 5pm

Coffee with a Cop – Pope County

Thursday May 14, 9am

Triad Meeting - Western Prairie Human Services

Thursday June 19 12pm

Potluck – Meeting to follow Farwell Community Center

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

Care is Connection: Mental Health and the Impact of Social Isolation on Aging

May is Mental Health Awareness Month, a time to reflect on emotional wellbeing and the many factors that influence it across the lifespan. While mental health is often thought of in clinical terms, it is also shaped by something much simpler: connection.

For older adults, social connection is not just a quality-of-life issue—it is a health factor. Research continues to show that social isolation and loneliness are linked to increased risks of depression, anxiety, cognitive decline, and poorer physical health outcomes. Staying connected is an important part of healthy aging.

In rural communities, maintaining those connections can become more challenging over time. Distance, transportation, weather, and life changes can reduce opportunities for regular interaction. What once felt connected can slowly become quieter without anyone intending it.

Social isolation is not always obvious. It does not always mean being completely alone. More often, it shows up as fewer phone calls, fewer invitations, or fewer reasons to leave the house. Over time, these changes can affect mood, motivation, and wellbeing.

This is why community connection matters. Whether attending a local event, participating in a support group, volunteering, or checking in on a neighbor, these interactions help reduce isolation and support mental health.

Caregivers also play an important role. Supporting a loved one's mental health often means paying attention not only to physical needs, but also to social and emotional wellbeing. Encouraging participation and supporting connection can make a difference.



Connection does not have to be large or complicated. Often, everyday interactions have the greatest impact on wellbeing.

Supporting Mental Health Through Connection

Social connection does not need to be complicated to be meaningful. Small, consistent interactions can help reduce isolation and support emotional wellbeing over time.

For older adults, maintaining connection may look different depending on health, mobility, and life circumstances. Even simple routines—such as a phone call, a shared meal, attending a community event, or visiting with a neighbor—can help strengthen a sense of belonging.



Across our three counties, there are regular senior meetings, events, and community gatherings that provide opportunities to stay connected, share information, and engage with others. These gatherings can be an important way to reduce isolation and build ongoing support networks.

One meaningful way to make a difference is through the Senior Companion Volunteer Program. For many older adults, having someone who shows up regularly—to visit, listen, and share time together—can make a significant impact. It's not about doing something big. It's about being present.

A simple visit, a conversation, or sharing a cup of coffee can turn an ordinary day into something to look forward to. For someone experiencing isolation, that connection can bring comfort, purpose, and a sense of belonging. For some individuals, these visits may be the only regular connection they have during the week.

Over time, these consistent visits can build trust, reduce loneliness, and create something truly meaningful. They become more than just visits – they become meaningful connections.

Senior Companions can also provide short periods of in-home respite, giving caregivers time to rest, run errands, or simply take a break, knowing their loved one is not alone.

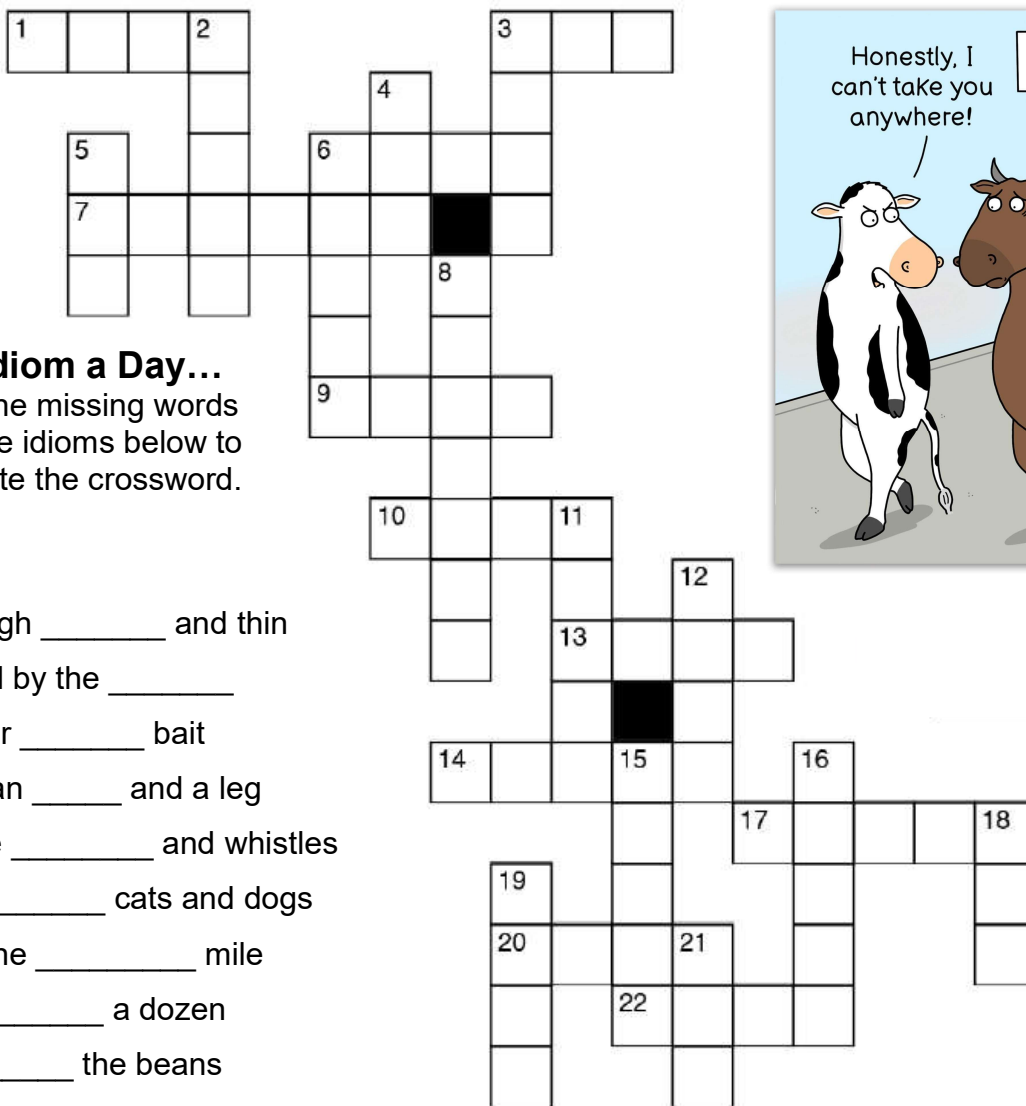
This kind of support can make a meaningful difference for both the individual and the caregiver.

Volunteers often find that the experience is just as meaningful for them. The relationships built through these visits are genuine, and the impact goes both ways—reminding us that connection is something we all need.

The Senior Companion Volunteer Program is offered in partnership with Lutheran Social Services, helping ensure volunteers are supported and older adults are thoughtfully matched. Local coordination, referrals, and ongoing communication help keep the program connected to the needs of our communities. Volunteers also have opportunities to connect through regular meetings, creating a sense of support and shared purpose.



**Contact Diane for more information
320-424-0018**



An Idiom a Day...

Fill in the missing words from the idioms below to complete the crossword.

Down

- 2. Through _____ and thin
- 3. Saved by the _____
- 4. Fish or _____ bait
- 5. Cost an _____ and a leg
- 6. All the _____ and whistles
- 8. It's _____ cats and dogs
- 11. Go the _____ mile
- 12. A _____ a dozen
- 15. _____ the beans
- 16. Take a rain _____
- 18. Rub the wrong _____
- 19. That _____ has sailed
- 21. Every _____ has his day

Across

- 1. Read the _____ act
- 3. It's in the _____
- 6. Like a _____ in a china shop
- 7. It's not _____ science
- 9. By the _____ of your teeth
- 10. A stitch in _____ saves nine
- 13. On _____ ice
- 14. Wild goose _____
- 17. _____ in the towel
- 20. _____ your horses
- 22. _____ before you leap.



Caring for Yourself While Caring for Others

Supporting a loved one living with dementia or another chronic condition can be meaningful, but it can also be emotionally and physically demanding. Many caregivers experience stress, fatigue, and feelings of isolation—often without recognizing how much it is affecting their own wellbeing.

Just as connection is important for older adults, it is equally important for caregivers. Staying connected to others, asking for help, and taking time for yourself are not luxuries—they are essential to being able to continue providing care.



Caregiver support groups and respite opportunities can provide time to recharge, connect with others, and take a needed break while knowing a loved one is safe and supported. Connecting with others who understand the caregiving experience can help reduce feelings of isolation and provide reassurance that you are not alone. It can also offer practical ideas, encouragement, and a safe space to share both challenges and successes.

Even short breaks can help restore energy, improve patience, and support overall wellbeing. Taking time to care for yourself is not stepping away from your role—it is an important part of being able to continue providing care over time.

Caregiving is not something you have to do alone. Support is available, and staying connected can make a meaningful difference—for both you and the person you care for.

Word Scramble

Unscramble the letters to come up with the word described by the given clues

1. O C A N E B _____
A light used as guidance or as a warning
2. U R B T E T I _____
An act or gift of gratitude or respect
3. L W E A R T R _____
A fishing boat that uses a net to make a catch
4. R A N P T E R _____
A companion or ally in a venture or relationship
5. I U R Q V E _____
A case for holding arrows
6. M T L U M A D F A L E _____ Flame-colored or shaped
7. I B U C R R _____
A set or learning standards and criteria
8. P R I T N U _____
A thick, edible, white root vegetable
9. K S A Y N W _____
Stylish and luxurious
10. I O B N S _____
A large oxlike mammal of the North American plains
11. N F I F U M _____
A small domed cake
12. G I B N A R A _____
An advantageous purchase
13. T L E I Q D U _____
Made of two layers of stitched cloth filled with a padding

Buy A Vowel

Use the clue provided to help fill in the blanks with vowels to come up with the word

1. C _ _ N _ G _
The invention of a new word or phrase
2. R _ L _ _ S _
To set free or let go
3. S P _ C _ _ _ S
Seemingly true, but actual false
4. C _ R _ _ S _
Engage in loud, drunken revels
5. L _ _ T _ R _ R
One who lingers aimlessly, an idler
6. D _ T _ B _ S _
Computer structure that stores and organizes information
7. B _ _ S T _ R _ _ S
Noisy, energetic, cheerful, and rowdy
8. M _ _ S T _ R _
Condensed liquid
9. _ _ D _ T _ R
One who reviews financial records
10. M _ _ S _
Handheld pointing device for computer
11. _ P H _ _ V _ L
Violent or sudden change
12. _ N V _ S _ _ N
Imagine a future possibility
13. T _ _ T _ _ N
A fee paid for college
14. C _ M B _ R S _ M _
Awkward and clumsy
15. _ _ S _ L
A wooden frame that supports an artist's canvas
16. F _ T _ G _ _
Extreme tiredness

What do you get when you cross a

tortoise with a *porcupine?*

Answer:
A slowpoke.



I can't do much in my new

shoes. They're loafers.



How did the tortoise feel after losing a race with a snail?

Answer:
Shell-shocked.



Sudoku

Fill in the grid so that all nine columns down, all nine rows across, and all nine 3-by-3 boxes contain the numbers 1 through 9. A number appears in each column, row, or box only once.

9			5		8			7
	8		3		2	9		5
	5	4					8	
	7		6	8			3	2
1					4			8
5			2	1	9		6	
			9		6			1
7	2	6			1		4	
		1	4	7			5	6



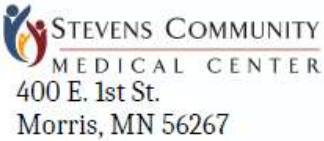
DEMENTIA ESSENTIALS

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



401 12th St. N.
Wheaton, MN 56296



1411 Highway 79 East
Elbow Lake, MN, 56531

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

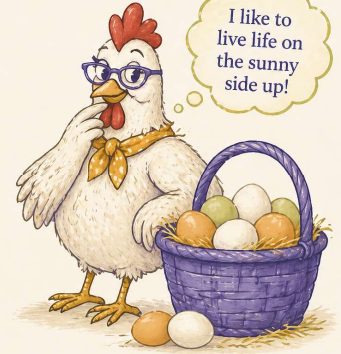
Jan. 21, 2026 1-4pm
April 22, 2026 1-4pm
July 22, 2026 1-4pm
Oct. 21, 2026 1-4pm

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

Don't put
all your
eggs
in one basket...

Unless you like
a good omelet!



1. COINAGE
2. RELEASE
3. SPECIOUS
4. CAROUSE
5. LOTTERY
6. DATABASE
7. BOISTEROUS
8. MOISTURE
9. AUDITOR
10. MOUSE
11. UPEVAL
12. ENVISION
13. TUITION
14. CUMBERSOM
15. EASEL
16. FATIGUE



- Word Scramble**
1. BEACON
 2. TRIBUTE
 3. TRAWLER
 4. PARTNER
 5. QUIVER
 6. FLAMMULATED
 7. RUBRIC
 8. TURNIP
 9. SWANKY
 10. BISON
 11. MUFFIN
 12. BARGAIN
 13. QUILTED
 14. MASQUERADE

9	1	3	5	6	8	4	2	7
6	8	7	3	4	2	9	1	5
2	5	4	1	9	7	6	8	3
4	7	9	6	8	5	1	3	2
1	6	2	7	3	4	5	9	8
5	3	8	2	1	9	7	6	4
3	4	5	9	2	6	8	7	1
7	2	6	8	5	1	3	4	9
8	9	1	4	7	3	2	5	6

Riddle Me This

1. Add two hours to eleven o'clock and you'll have one o'clock
2. A yardstick
3. "What time is it?"
4. Mercury
5. A pillow
6. A fishhook

