

# Granite Falls Living at Home/ Block Nurse Program Newsletter

Helping Seniors stay in their own Homes

Phone 320-564-3235

Winter 2021

## From Kelly's Desk

I hope everyone had a **Merry Christmas** and a happy New Year. So glad to see 2020 leave; **WE MADE IT!** I have seen our community step up and volunteer in many ways! I have enjoyed writing personal notes to our clients and volunteers. I apologize for my sense of humor but I hope the jokes made you chuckle ...and possibly sigh.

Looking forward to 2021, our battle with Covid 19 is not yet over. **Please keep your guard up!** Masks, hand washing, and physical distancing are still important. **Try to get exercise!** Simply walk, use an exercise bike if you have one, or do the chair exercises you may have learned in Gentle Fitness and Matter of Balance.



**We** are starting a new **“Walk across America”** program. This is a **virtual 3,095 mile walk** from Boston to the West Coast. Did you know, the **AVERAGE PERSON OVER 65 Years old** can walk a mile in 17 minutes? **I am challenging all of our clients and volunteers to walk or perform some form of exercise for at least 17 minutes a day.** We will add our exercise minutes together and log “miles” marking our progress on a map of the United States. Any form of exercise can count as long as it is performed for 17 minutes. We will post weekly updates on the “location” of our walk as well as a brief description of the town we have arrived at on Facebook. **This will be fun!** Please call the office about once a week with the total minutes of exercise you have performed. For more information, our Phone number is 320-564-3235. We cannot wait to hear from you. **Let's make this a great year!**

Continued on page 3

## From Kim's Desk

**W**elcome winter! We continue to keep busy setting up in-town rides with our volunteer drivers during this time. All riders and drivers are asked to wear a mask and are screened with a Covid-19 questionnaire before each ride. Feel free to contact us for in town rides/errands at 320-564-3235.

I would like to provide you with a few **guidelines for staying safe** this winter season should you venture outside. So far we have been blessed with mild weather. But, even so, icy sidewalks and walkways can be a danger for falling. So be watchful as you venture out and remember the following:

### Steps for staying healthy

REMEMBER TO:

- 1.) WALK LIKE A PENGUIN: TAKE SHORT, FLAT FOOTED STEPS
- 2.) FOCUS ON TAKING IT ONE STEP AT A TIME
- 3.) WATCH FOR CHANGING CONDITIONS
- 4.) WEAR SHOES OR BOOTS THAT PROVIDE TRACTION ON SNOW AND ICE
- 5.) REPORT ICY CONDITIONS TO APPROPRIATE PERSON
- 6.) WALK IN DESIGNATED WALKWAYS ONLY, AND DON'T TAKE SHORTCUTS

By taking care to **watch your steps**, you can enjoy this nice winter and be safe at the same time, decreasing the likelihood of falling.

Thankfully, Covid-19 vaccines will soon be available for all seniors and essential workers. But, in the meantime, remember to **continue with good handwashing, wearing a mask, keeping distance of 6 feet apart, use hand sanitizer, avoid large groups, do not socialize or attend functions when not feeling well.**

## And... from Mark's Corner

This time of year, I like to take a moment and look back. **What a year 2020 was!** While Covid-19 dominated the news, there were also many bright points. First, **our volunteers and the organizations we work with have risen to the occasion!** Our army of sewing volunteers made masks when none were available in stores! We continue to have all sizes in the office, **give us a call for a free facemask.** As Kim said, our volunteers also continue to provide in-town-assisted-transportation, supportive telephone reassurance, errand and certain chore services! We will offer out-of-town rides after the pandemic.

**I want to give a shout out:** to our friends at Almich's for providing grocery delivery; for the dinner at your door meals delivered by area church volunteers; the Granite Falls food shelf volunteers; all healthcare professionals; our ambulance and law enforcement programs; the Legion, VFW, Lions club & Kiwanis members, the fire and rescue volunteers and others who helped with USDA food distribution; all the many other organizations that lend a helping hand; and, **Prairie Five hot and frozen meals, now available for delivery.**

**There were also highlights:** the Building Bridges Christmas Concert, the monthly Heart2Heart café gatherings, the writing workshops and **the anonymous donation from a Thrivent member, for Christmas baskets.** There is now a **new memory garden** located near Granite Ridge **built by our volunteers!** Kelly spearheaded this project, which was funded by the **Granite Falls Area Community Foundation**, in collaboration with Countryside Public Health, the Avera Granite Falls Health Center and the City of Granite Falls.

Looking forward, we are pleased to announce that **we will soon be offering new Virtual programs, on Zoom.** Give us a call if you would like to join our **zoom coffee chats** that begin **Tuesday, January 26<sup>th</sup> at 9:30 am.** And, thanks to funding through the YM Cares Act, we will be able to loan out several I-Pads. **Call our office at 320-564-3235 for more information.**

Finally, we are excited to announce **we have upgraded our website,** made possible with a grant from the Granite Falls Area Foundation. Check it out at [www.lahgranitefalls.org](http://www.lahgranitefalls.org)

**Some of the best news so-far, Covid-19 vaccines are now available!** This means the beginning of the end for the pandemic. If you are wondering when you can receive your vaccination, phone Countryside Public Health. In Yellow Medicine at: 320-564-3010 and in Chippewa County at: 320-269-2174. The vaccine process will take a while. But, hopefully by early summer we will be back to normal!

## Zoom & other Virtual opportunities

We are going to challenge ourselves this winter by offering virtual programming and using Zoom! **Exercise classes and coffee hour** will be offered using social media. These events will be open to anyone, although you have to provide your own coffee. Beginning **January 26<sup>th</sup> at 9:30 am,** we will hold **our first zoom-coffee-hour.**

**Call our office at 320-564-3235** if you are interested. We will be learning along with you and we will help you with the technology. Just think! You can have the same technology that the kids are using for their schoolwork! Won't it be nice to be able to talk to them about your zoom experiences?



Haven't ever used Zoom, FaceTime or Google Chat but would like to learn how? Give our office a call and we will help you figure it out.



### The Heart-2-Heart Memory Café



H2H café, BBs choir & Gentle Fitness are still paused...but, we will let you know as soon as that can change

### The Building Bridges Choir Gentle Fitness



Your generous support along with grants from these organizations makes it possible for us to deliver the services and programs you deserve!

*I am reminded of a Winnie the Pooh short story about loneliness.*



....It occurred to Pooh and Piglet that they hadn't heard from Eeyore for several days. So they put on their hats and coats and trotted across the Hundred Acre Wood to Eeyore's stick house. Inside the house was Eeyore.

"Hello Eeyore," said Pooh.

"Hello Pooh. Hello Piglet," said Eeyore, in a glum sounding voice.

"We just thought we'd check in on you," said Piglet, "because we hadn't heard from you, and so we wanted to know if you were okay."

Eeyore was silent for a moment.

"Am I okay?" he asked, eventually. "Well, I don't know, to be honest. Are any of us really okay? That's what I ask myself. All I can tell you, Pooh and Piglet, is that right now I feel really rather sad, and alone, and not much fun to be around at all. Which is why I haven't bothered you. Because you wouldn't want to waste your time hanging out with someone who is sad, and alone, and not much fun to be around at all, would you now."

Pooh looked at Piglet, and Piglet looked at Pooh, and they both sat down, one on either side of Eeyore in his stick house.

Eeyore looked at them in surprise. "What are you doing?"

"We're sitting here with you," said Pooh, "because we are your friends. And true friends don't care if someone is feeling sad, or alone, or not much fun to be around at all. True friends are there for you anyway. And so here we are."

"Oh," said Eeyore. "Oh." And the three of them sat there in silence, and while Pooh and Piglet said nothing at all; somehow, almost imperceptibly, Eeyore started to feel a very tiny little bit better.

Because Pooh and Piglet were there. No more; no less.

...Telephone calls and handwritten letters will need to take place of personal visits for now but they are so helpful in combatting loneliness. **Thank you volunteers** for all you do to brighten the lives of our clients!

And so, this is Pooh calling out. **"Happy January to all and to all a happy January!"**

# Thank You for Giving!



**We appreciate your support** of our program with memorials and donations. As you know, we are partially supported by grants. Some foundations are more likely to award grants when there are matching monies available, given through community donations and memorials. Your support is greatly appreciated.

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## **Our Non-Profit Needs You!**

If you would like to support elders living in their own homes, please send a donation or sign up to be a volunteer. You may indicate if your gift is a memorial or honorarium below. We know that you understand the need and great demand for our services. We thank you for your support!

Your name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

I wish to make a gift of \$25 \_\_\_\_\_ \$50 \_\_\_\_\_ \$100 \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

Please accept my gift in honor of \_\_\_\_\_ or in memory of: \_\_\_\_\_

Your gift is tax deductible.

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