**ShareCare Volunteer Makes a Difference by Pam Bradshaw**

On a snowy day in 2019 several members of Share Care of Leelanau’s Board and staff braved the weather to host a public meeting to present its inclusive plan for reaching more senior citizens in Leelanau County. Although I had support from ShareCare in the past when my own parents were aging, I was impressed with their new message and vision for the future.

I began to volunteer and last summer I was invited to join the board. My involvement with ShareCare has been very satisfying as my new volunteer role is part of a team of people who work together to support our most vulnerable elders.

As an example of the ways ShareCare can support a senior, let me introduce TD, someone I’ve had direct contact with while working with ShareCare. TD came to the attention of ShareCare through a phone call her loving neighbor made in hopes of getting her some help. ShareCare’s nurse called and arranged a friendly visit to TD, who is housebound. Soon after, ShareCare organized rides to the dentist and doctor, all provided by volunteers. They also arranged for groceries, which I delivered as TD is in my region of the County.

Over time, I began visiting TD once a week to bring groceries, postage stamps and take her mail to the post office. We began to know each other a little more and she confided that with winter on the way, she was feeling more frightened about being alone and considering a move to a Traverse City Senior Community. ShareCare helped out by making sure TD got connected with a Senior Housing advisor and a Social worker to assess the situation and help TD access other services if she needed them. TD started getting Meals on Wheels.

TD moved into Traverse City at the end of January. My visits, as her ShareCare volunteer, continue to this day, even during the Covid-19 crisis. I take things she needs to her new residence to be delivered to her; and, we talk on the phone once a week. Also, concerned by how seemingly overwhelmed TD was, arrangements were made for her to consult with the attorney and financial advisor responsible for her affairs. Thankfully, they have taken action and she is doing better. I have also received a phone call from TD’s out-of-town relative, who expressed how grateful he was that I am nearby and able to help.

During the coronavirus sheltering, TD is happier than most because she is not overwhelmed or feeling alone while housebound. Perhaps our ‘stay at home’ order is a time when each of us will think of how we spend our time and money, After what we have been through these past few weeks, consider volunteering or donating to ShareCare to help the program during these difficult times.

I sure hope you will help. I know I am pleased to be part of the support for TD and a volunteer with ShareCare.