

ShareCare

THE CONNECTOR

IN THIS ISSUE:

From The Director	1
Introducing Erin	2
Wellness Corner	3
Upcoming Events	4
Member Profile	5
Volunteer Profile	6
Volunteers in Action	7
ShareCare's Volunteers	8
Heart Health	9
Winter Eats	10
Thank You for the Support	11

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Celebrating 30 Years of Impact: A Legacy of Compassion and Community



From Dawn Bousamra, Executive Director

In the heart of Leelanau County, a beacon of compassion has been shining for three decades. This year marks the 30th anniversary of ShareCare! Three decades ago, a group of dedicated individuals came together with a shared vision—to create an organization that would serve and uplift Leelanau County seniors. Through the years, ShareCare has adapted to the evolving needs of our senior community, and I am honored to be a part of this journey.

As we mark this milestone, we invite you to celebrate 30 years of volunteer-driven, dedicated service. Stay tuned; we'll have events and fundraisers throughout 2024, and we hope you will join in the fun. Watch for information on an Adult Spelling Bee Fundraiser coming this spring! And check out our upcoming Wellness programs on page 4.

The 30th anniversary is not just a marker of the past; it's a stepping stone into the future. As we celebrate the legacy of those who have come before us, we also envision a future where our nonprofit continues to evolve and thrive. We remain dedicated to ensuring that every senior in our community feels the warmth of care and support.

To all who have been a part of this journey—whether as volunteers, donors, staff, or beneficiaries—thank you for being the driving force behind 30 years of supporting Leelanau County seniors.

Here's to the next 30 years of continued growth, compassion, and community!

Cheers to 30 Years!



Drivers needed!

Contact Jennie
for more information
phone: 231-256-0221
email: info@sharecareleelanau.org



WELCOME *Erin Gysbers*

Senior Wellness Liaison

Erin grew up in Michigan on the shores of Lake Huron and returned to her northern roots with her family after working and exploring abroad. She received her degree in Exercise Science from Lake Superior State University and completed graduate studies at the University of Indianapolis in Occupational Therapy. For the past twelve years Erin has gained thoughtful experience providing skilled rehabilitation services to clients through direct care, in both outpatient and long-term care settings. She has also had the opportunity to focus her energy on ventures in community well-being, women's health, and honing knowledge of prolonged pain and chronic condition management through lifestyle modifications.

Erin enjoys playing in the sand, surf, and snow with her two young daughters, a competitive game of volleyball, getting out for a round of golf with her husband and practicing yoga to bring some quiet moments to her days. She has a passion for improving the health and wellness of fellow Northern Michigan residents and is looking forward to supporting you on your journey!

TO PREVENT FALLS IN THE WINTER... **DO THE PENGUIN WALK!**



- Bend slightly and walk flat footed
- Point your feet out slightly like a penguin
- Keep your centre of gravity over your feet as much as possible
- Watch where you are stepping
- Take shorter, shuffle-like steps
- Keep your arms at your sides (not in your pockets!)
- Concentrate on keeping your balance
- Go S-L-O-W-L-Y



FAQ *with* Erin

by Erin Gysbers, MOT, OTR/L
Senior Wellness Liaison

Q: How long have you been with ShareCare and what is your role?

A: My time at ShareCare started in September, 2023. I am stepping into the role of Senior Wellness Liaison. The shift in this position from Care Coordinator to the newly named Senior Wellness Liaison reflects the updated mission and vision of ShareCare and illustrates how we can best meet the needs of our community moving forward.

Q: How will you support ShareCare Members?

A: My goal will be to partner with ShareCare members and their loved ones to enhance quality of life. By accurately assessing each unique circumstance I can make the most helpful recommendations for services and community resources. My background in occupational therapy will assist in framing my approach as a practitioner of wellness services within this community setting. I hope to help individuals live as fully as possible, while providing education to empower autonomy and target health promotion.

Q: How will you offer this support?

A: Communication! I am introducing myself to our members and increasing my presence within the community. I encourage anyone with questions or thoughts to please feel free to contact me either by phone or email. I can be reached at 231-256-0221 ext. 305 or erin@sharecareleelanau.org.

I offer in-person daily living assessments within the home environment. It is beneficial for me to understand varying contexts, roles, functional skills, and the responsibilities of each individual and their network. A home visit assists in making targeted recommendations to connect those who would benefit with optimal resources.

In addition, I facilitate a Caregiver Support Group for those caring for a loved one living with a memory loss diagnosis. I urge anyone who maintains this role to join us or reach out for more information. ShareCare is also actively working to increase health and wellness education, and social offerings in the area, in partnership with Leelanau County Senior Services. This educational programming will focus on a variety of wellness topics to engage members in managing their own health and wellness. It will also serve as an opportunity to increase awareness of and connection to local professionals.

Q: What is your favorite part about working with ShareCare?

A: I enjoy listening to community members and getting to know their stories. There is so much wisdom to be gained by sharing lived experience. I get to learn from each of you every day and I hope to support your wellbeing along the way!



UPCOMING EVENTS

2024 Winter Programming



Leelanau County Senior Services
& ShareCare of Leelanau

Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction for Seniors *with Wendy Weckstein*

January 11 | 12:30 pm – 2:00 pm

Glen Lake Community Library

Empire

Safe Mobility and Fall Prevention

presented by Aubrey Jabour, PT, DPT, CEAS

January 26 | 2:00 pm – 3:30 pm

Leelanau County Government

Center Suttons Bay

Ageless Grace® Neuroplasticity Exercises *with Lisa Hawkins George*

February 5 | 4:00 pm – 5:30 pm

Sleeping Bear Bay Club Maple City

February 8 | 12:30 pm – 2:00 pm

Wildfire Fitness Inside Studio 9

Elmwood Township

Cooking For One *with Jane Rapin*

March 14 | April 11

May 9 | June 13 | 12:30 pm – 2:30 pm

The Friendship Center Suttons Bay

This will be a 4 part series in which attendees are encouraged to attend each offering.

TO SIGN UP, please call Erin
at ShareCare of Leelanau
231-256-0221 ext. 305

No charge for these events.

CALL TODAY! Class space is limited.



**CALL THE RIDELINE AT
(231) 256-0221 Ext 303**

Please include the following information:

- Name of person needing transportation
- Phone number of person needing transportation
- Destination of appointment
- Date and time of appointment
- Any special needs such as no trucks or SUV's

All requests must be submitted a minimum of 3 FULL BUSINESS DAYS prior to appointment day and we will be checking the requests each day at 3p.m.

We will call you if there are questions. Once a ride is confirmed, the driver will call you to let you know the time they will be arriving. If we cannot find a driver, we will let you know a day in advance so you can make other arrangements or cancel.

If you have a cancellation, please dial
(231) 256-0221 Ext. 301.



CAROL WATERS

Finding her voice in nature, community and creativity



“I was participating in a yoga workshop with other women when I realized I was grieving not having a creative outlet in my life,” said Share Care member Carol Waters. “One of the teachers asked me what I thought I might like to do. “Weaving’ came out of my mouth — it came from my heart, not my head.”

Carol recalled that her impulse was supported by one of the women in the group offering her a loom and another connecting her to the Weavers Guild in Traverse City. So began one of the many passions which have come to define her life in Leelanau County.

Years ago, Carol left a life in Grosse Pointe which included involvement in a family business and competitive tennis matches to study herbal medicine with a woman named Loren Cruden, an herbalist and former midwife.

“I met someone through a Women’s Circle in the Detroit area who’d been a midwife partner with Loren. I was just drawn to the study of this use of plants.”

Carol cited elderberry and echinacea as useful plants to support the immune system. “You can make a tincture or a syrup with elderberries. Echinacea is wonderful because you can use the whole plant.”

Not surprisingly, Carol’s involvement with plants and weaving brought her to the study of natural dyes. And that study brought her to establish a “dye garden” at Meadowlark Farm where she’s been a member of the Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program and a volunteer as well for 30 years. Among the plants she grew there was Japanese indigo, which results in a beautiful dark blue. Carol also wild harvested pokeberry which, although it “makes a lovely red color,” it is invasive and would not have been welcomed in a farm garden, she said.

Shortly after arriving in Leelanau County,

Carol was able to purchase a cabin and land that had belonged to Loren Cruden’s mother Barbara. And following that,

Carol’s commitment to nature and land conservation was strengthened even further. “I joined the Leelanau Conservancy early on and was helped to get the 20 acres of land in Maple City that cares for me into an easement so that the wildlife, trees, stream and now beaver pond are protected from development in perpetuity.”

Carol became a member of ShareCare because of their “focus of community building with the intention of caring for elders and helping them live well in their own homes as long as possible.”

She has received the help of many volunteers who are drivers, providing transportation to and from appointments.

“This important service has worked very well for me, and I have met many interesting, lively, caring neighbors I would not have interacted with otherwise,” Carol said. “The program is well run and the staff supportive and kind. I also am the very lucky recipient of a weekly phone call from Jean Peterson, a ShareCare volunteer member who has become a friend though we have never met.”

Carol’s passion for exploration and learning has continued.

“I belong to two local singing groups that have helped me find my voice and meet others who enjoy chanting and singing about the Earth and healing,” she said. “I had sung with a church choir in the past, but I had to learn to trust that I have a voice and all voices are worthy of singing. You can have ordinary voice and still sing.”



Volunteer Profile

by Jennie Berkson

MIKE SHEEHAN

A man of words, actions and caring

We've all heard the expression "a man of his word" or "a man of few words," but when it comes to Share Care volunteer Mike Sheehan, the appropriate expression might be "a man of many words."

First of all, he spent several decades as an English teacher (lots of words there) for the Chicago City Colleges. Since then, he's had 11 books published (even more words!) and most of the books have been about words. And finally, he's the co-host of the call-in radio show "Words to the Wise" which has aired weekly on WTCM-AM for more than 20 years.

"It's the only one of its kind on AM radio," Mike said. "Because it's live streamed on the Internet as well, we get callers from around the world." Callers ask questions about the proper usage or origins of words. Subjects discussed on the show have formed the basis of three of Mike's books, one of which is humorously titled *On the Lamb in a Doggie Dog World*, which gives you an idea of the kind of topics addressed.

Mike started as a volunteer with Share Care in the spring of 2023 with a professional and personal background that prepared him very well for the role.

After being offered "a golden parachute" by Chicago City Colleges in 1994, Mike took early retirement.

"Since then, I have volunteered for various senior-oriented organizations and agencies," Mike said. "My last position was as a state commissioner, serving on the Michigan Commission on Services to the Aging. It was a gubernatorial appointment, limited to three three-

year terms, and they ran out in 2019."

Mike also served on the Michigan State Advisory Council on Aging for 15 years (five as chairman), working with 40 other members doing research on senior issues and advising the governor and legislature on the needs of Michigan's older population.

As a result, he came to Share Care with a significant knowledge of the issues which form a core part of Share Care's reason for existence.

But perhaps equally valuable, if not more so, is Mike's personal experience with what it means to be a caregiver.

"Caregiving is a heavy responsibility," he said, "and if it is spousal, it's a 24/7 proposition. Even though such caregiving is based on love, it can be a crushing burden. I know that from personal experience, having lost three wives to cancer since 1974."

So, in addition to being on a couple of committees and recently being elected to the Board of Directors, Mike does respite work. "This involves giving caregivers a couple of hours off to recharge their batteries or even to shop for a pair of shoes," he explained.

And although some might shy away from yet another close relationship after so much loss, Mike has not hesitated to engage with romance and companionship once again. He has a new partner, a woman he reconnected with recently after running into her at a local grocery store.

"I was a celibate monk of the order of Saint Augustine for 13 years as a young man who then became a serial monogamist," he quipped.





SHARECARE VOLUNTEERS

Fall Clean-Up

Volunteers assisted seniors with odd jobs, such as moving patio furniture, light gardening chores and other small tasks.



FOR INFORMATION on how to become a SHARECARE VOLUNTEER, please call us at (231) 256-0221 ext. 304.



Scan me

Food, Fun & Friendship

STARTING JANUARY 12, 2024

MEALS ON WHEELS OF NMCAA

Will be bringing HOT congregate meals to
FRIENDSHIP CENTER OF SUTTONS BAY

201 W Broadway, Suttons Bay, MI 49682

Fridays at 12:00pm



Reservations Required by Thursdays at 10:00AM
Leelanau County Senior Services at 231-256-8121





ShareCare's Volunteers



WHAT YOU “get” in a SHARECARE volunteer

.....
by Jennie Arguello,
Volunteer Manager

Arriving at the place in life where we must ask for the assistance of others can initially feel unnatural. As we evaluate what is safe, sensible and smart, we may to our surprise actually notice the door opening to new opportunities. Take for example inquiring about what you “get” in a ShareCare volunteer. When I explored this question with members and volunteers, the answers were certainly worth sharing.

I heard the words dedication, friendliness and kindness. I smiled as I recalled a member relaying the story of a volunteer faithfully calling them every week. They mentioned how patient the volunteer was even when the member’s favorite topics of discussion were at times repetitive or challenging.

Peace of mind was mentioned as one member discussed a volunteer driver’s excellent driving skills and another expressed thankfulness for the volunteer who repeatedly delivered their groceries. Friendly visit volunteers were said to provide the gift of time and commitment as they brought their bright spirits into the home of a member without family nearby. Dependability from a vetted, trained volunteer allowed a member to function more effectively. Although this feedback was gathered from a rather small segment of ShareCare participants, it is extremely representative.

So, as you strive to live your most vital life possible, rest assured that the volunteers’ acquired knowledge, ongoing training and disciplined observance of good boundaries contributes greatly to our healthy and professional service. And after thirty years, it is backed up by an impressive history of caring.



A HEARTFELT GUIDE to CARDIOVASCULAR HEALTH in Seniors

As we age, the importance of heart health becomes increasingly apparent. The golden years are a time for enjoying life to the fullest and maintaining a healthy heart is paramount to ensuring that these years are filled with vitality and well-being.

Tailored Nutrition for Seniors:

Senior citizens often have unique nutritional needs. A heart-healthy diet for seniors should focus on nutrient-dense foods that support cardiovascular health. This includes a variety of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins. Seniors should pay attention to portion sizes, limit sodium intake, and consult a healthcare professional to ensure their diet is tailored to their health needs.

Exercise for Heart Vitality:

Regular physical activity remains crucial for seniors to maintain heart health. While the intensity and duration may need to be adjusted based on individual capabilities, activities such as walking, swimming, and low-impact aerobics can be highly beneficial. Strength training exercises can also help maintain muscle mass and support cardiovascular fitness.

Weight Management:

As metabolism naturally slows with age, maintaining a healthy weight can become more challenging. Emphasizing a balanced diet, portion control, and regular physical activity can help seniors achieve and maintain a healthy weight without compromising overall well-being.

Mindful Stress Management:

Seniors often face unique stressors, including health concerns, financial considerations, and lifestyle changes. Incorporating stress-management techniques such as meditation, deep breathing exercises, or gentle yoga can positively affect mental and cardiovascular health.

Quality Sleep:

Adequate and restful sleep is essential for seniors to support heart health. Establishing a consistent sleep routine, creating a comfortable sleep environment, and addressing any sleep disorders can improve cardiovascular well-being.

Regular Check-ups and Medication Management:

Regular health check-ups become even more critical in the senior years. Monitoring blood pressure, cholesterol levels, and other key indicators of heart health can aid in early detection and intervention. Communicating openly with healthcare providers about any concerns, medications, or lifestyle changes is essential.

Hydration:

Staying well-hydrated is crucial for seniors, as dehydration can exacerbate existing health conditions. Proper hydration supports the cardiovascular system, aids in digestion, and helps regulate body temperature. Seniors should make a conscious effort to drink an adequate amount of water throughout the day.



Chicken Parm Soup

www.thepioneerwoman.com

Total Time 30 min. | Prep: 20 min.
Makes 6 servings

Ingredients

- 2 tbsp. olive oil
- 1 onion, diced
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 tbsp. Italian seasoning, plus more for topping
- 2 (14-oz.) can diced tomatoes
- 4 c. low-sodium chicken broth
- 2 c. ditalini, mini penne, or other small pasta
- 3 c. chopped or shredded rotisserie chicken
- Kosher salt and black pepper, to taste
- 3 oz. mozzarella cheese, shredded or thinly sliced
- Chopped fresh basil and red pepper flakes, for serving (optional)



Directions

1. Heat the olive oil in a large pot over medium heat. Add the onion, garlic, bay leaf, and Italian seasoning and cook, stirring, until the onion is softened, 4 to 5 minutes.
2. Add the diced tomatoes, chicken broth, and 2 cups of water to the pot. Increase the heat to high and bring to a boil. Add the pasta, return to a boil, and cook until the soup is slightly thickened and the pasta is al dente, 8 to 10 minutes. Remove from the heat and stir in the chicken. Discard the bay leaf. Season with salt and pepper.
3. Divide the soup among bowls and top with the mozzarella. Let the cheese melt for 1 minute. Top with chopped basil, Italian seasoning, and red pepper flakes, to serve.



ShareCare

Thanks to the following organizations for their support

Atwill Memorial Chapel Cemetery
Northport, Michigan

Leelanau County
Senior Services

**MICHIGAN HEALTH
ENDOWMENT FUND**



ANTRIM . BENZIE . GRAND TRAVERSE . KALKASKA . LEELANAU

We appreciate all who donate and help support the mission of ShareCare of Leelanau, Inc. We are dedicated to supporting older adults and the friends, family, and community who surround them. You can be assured we will continue to be good stewards of all tax-deductible gifts. If you would like to designate your gift as a Legacy or Memorial Gift, please call or email us with your wishes.

(231) 256-0221 ext 302 • Email: info@ShareCareLeelanau.org

Donations can be made online through our website at www.ShareCareLeelanau.org, via snail mailing a check to ShareCare, PO Box 937, Leland, MI 49654, or scan this QR code and it will direct you to our donation page.



ShareCare
THE CONNECTOR

OUR MISSION:

We support and enhance the well-being of seniors in Leelanau County through a network of volunteers and community.

OUR VISION:

We will be a model for advancing wellness education and experiences for older adults, providing lifestyle support through accessible services, community connection, and a robust volunteer network.

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