

ShareCare THE CONNECTOR

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CONTACT US:

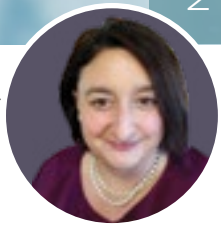
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Suttons Bay, MI 49682

From Dawn Bousamra,
Executive Director



WINTER CAN BE A LONELY SEASON

Snowy roads, short days, and canceled plans can quietly shrink a person's world—especially for older adults. For some, a simple trip to the store or a visit with a friend becomes harder. For others, days may pass without a single conversation. Loneliness can settle in long before spring arrives.

At ShareCare, we see this every winter and we work to meet it with connection.

Sometimes that connection looks like a friendly phone call, a volunteer checking in just to say hello. Sometimes it's a safe ride to a medical appointment or shared laughter at our Memory Cafe. And sometimes, connection looks like coming together to learn, move, and care for our bodies.

That's why our Wellness Programming plays such an important role in helping seniors beat the winter blues. These offerings create opportunities to gather, stay engaged, build confidence, and support both physical and emotional well-being during a season that can feel long and isolating.

We invite you to explore all of our winter wellness programs and opportunities for connection on Page 4 of this newsletter.

Loneliness isn't always loud. It doesn't always announce itself. But it matters—and it affects health, independence, and quality of life.

Because connection is care. Because being seen and heard matters. And because no one in our community should feel forgotten simply because the season has changed.



Drivers needed!

Contact Jennie
for more information
phone: 231-256-0221 ext. 304
email: info@sharecareleelanau.org

SHARECARE PROGRAMS INCLUDE:

- Medical and Wellness Rides • Respite
- Spring and Fall Clean up • Prescription, Mail and Grocery Delivery
- Friendly Phone Calls • Friendly Visits • Wellness Programs
- Library Item Delivery • Caregiver Support • Memory Cafe

ETHICAL ISSUES IN AMERICAN HISTORY

Discussion Courses with Retired U-M Professor and ShareCare Volunteer David Harris

Explore the moral dilemmas that shaped America—and still challenge us today.

Join retired University of Michigan professor David Harris for two engaging, discussion-based courses examining pivotal ethical decisions from American history and their relevance to current public issues. Participants will read short historical chapters (loaned for the course) and engage in thoughtful, respectful dialogue.

Course 1: Ethical Issues in American History

Wednesdays | 5:30–7:00 PM

April 22 – May 13, 2026 (4 sessions)

Topics include: Thomas Jefferson and slavery, Susan B. Anthony and the 15th Amendment, and the U.S. response to Jewish refugees aboard the St. Louis.

Course 2: More Ethical Issues in American History

Wednesdays | 5:30–7:00 PM

May 20 – June 10, 2026 (4 sessions)

Topics include: Richard Wright and the Jim Crow South, the 1937 GM sit-down strike, and Japanese-American military service during WWII.

LOCATION:

Northwestern Michigan College
Boardman Lake Campus

2200 Dendrinos Drive,
Traverse City | Room BLC 12

COST: \$37 per student, per course

CLASS SIZE: Limited to 20 participants

Perfect for lifelong learners who enjoy history, ethical reflection, and meaningful conversation.

Call 231-995-1000 for more information and to sign up.



Leelanau County Senior Services

Striving to celebrate and support seniors within our community

Services

- Personal Care*
- Respite Care*
- Homemaker*
- Medication Management*
- Personal Emergency Response System
- File of Life
- Medical Equipment Loan Closet
- Medical Transportation
- Free AARP Income Tax Prep
- Medicare Assistance Program
- Foot Care Vouchers
- Estate Planning
- Comprehensive In-Home Assessments

Assistance Programs

- Dental Assistance*
- Eye Glass Assistance*
- Hearing Aid Assistance*
- Heating/Utility Assistance*
- Snow Removal Assistance*
- BATA Passes Available*
- Legal Assistance*
- Unmet Need Assistance*
- Project Fresh Produce Coupons**

Supported Programs

- ShareCare of Leelanau
- Meals on Wheels
- Laundry Project
- Senior Companion Program

Activities

- Lunch Bunch
- Annual Senior Expo
- Wellness Programs
- Congregate Meal Sites
- Support Groups
- Annual Christmas Party



* Income/Assess tested through application and home evaluation process
** Funded by USDA

8527 E Government Center Dr. Suite 106
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www.leelanau.gov

CONTACT US!

(231) 256-8121



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



The Value of Nutrition Throughout the Lifespan

Nutrition plays a meaningful role in supporting energy, resilience, and overall well-being. The foods we choose help fuel daily activities, support the body's natural systems, and influence how we feel from day to day. Small, thoughtful choices around nutrition can make a positive difference in function.

Nutrition also supports mental clarity, mood, and enjoyment of everyday life. Meals can be a source of routine, comfort,

and connection, adding to overall wellness beyond physical health. Learning more about nutrition helps build awareness and confidence, making healthy living feel more approachable and sustainable.

Understanding how food supports the body empowers individuals to stay engaged in their wellness journey. This season, we're excited to spotlight nutrition through several upcoming wellness programs designed to inform, inspire, and support healthy living.

We invite you to join us and explore the value of nutrition throughout the lifespan. *Please see the Winter Wellness Program schedule on page 4 to learn more.*

Winter 2026 Wellness Programming

Leelanau County Senior Services & ShareCare of Leelanau

JANUARY

THURSDAY, 29 ▪ **What You Should know about Osteoarthritis**

12:30pm - 2:00pm at ShareCare 99 Fourth St. Suttons Bay
With Aubrey Jabour, PT, DPT of Northbound Physical Therapy and Wellness. This presentation will review what osteoarthritis is and strategies for preventing and managing it.

FEBRUARY

WEDNESDAY, 4 ▪ **Foundations of Good Nutrition: Nourish Your Joints**

11:00am - 12:15pm at ShareCare 99 Fourth St. Suttons Bay
with Carol Bell, RD, Nutritionist at Table Health
Participants will learn about foods that support joint comfort and practical nutrition principles that can support everyday health and well-being.

TUESDAY, 24 ▪ **ShareCare Memory Cafe**

12:30pm – 2:00pm at ShareCare, 99 Fourth St., Suttons Bay

WEDNESDAY, 25 ▪ **How to use the BATA Bus Presentation**

12:30pm - 2:00pm at ShareCare 99 Fourth St. Suttons Bay
with Bay Area Transportation Authority Outreach Team
A wellness program that empowers participants to confidently navigate and use the BATA bus system to reduce transportation stress and enhance independence.

MARCH

MONDAY, 2 ▪ **Foundations of Good Nutrition: Session 2**

11:00am - 12:15pm at ShareCare 99 Fourth St. Suttons Bay
with Carol Bell, RD, Nutritionist at Table Health
An accessible community education session designed to explore the basics of health eating.

TUESDAY, 24 ▪ **ShareCare Memory Cafe**

12:30pm – 2:00pm at ShareCare, 99 Fourth St., Suttons Bay

APRIL

WEDNESDAY, 15 ▪ **Foundations of Good Nutrition: Session 3**

11:00am - 12:15pm at ShareCare 99 Fourth St. Suttons Bay
with Carol Bell, RD, Nutritionist at Table Health
An accessible community education session designed to explore the basics of health eating.

TUESDAY, 28 ▪ **ShareCare Memory Cafe**

12:30pm – 2:00pm at ShareCare, 99 Fourth St., Suttons Bay



To sign up, contact
Erin, ShareCare of Leelanau
231-256-0221 ext. 305

All programs are free of charge.
Call today! Class space is limited.

Leelanau County
Senior Services

ShareCare
sharecareleelanau.org



Member Profile

by Dawn Bousamra



KAREN MULVAHILL

*Believing in the Mission—and
Living the Dream*

When Karen Mulvahill moved to Leelanau County in 2009, she didn't yet know how deeply she would become connected to ShareCare. What she *did* know was that community mattered.

Not long after arriving, Karen attended an informal gathering at someone's home to learn more about ShareCare. What she heard resonated immediately. The mission felt important—necessary, even—and she became a member, viewing it as both a charitable contribution and an investment in the well-being of her new community.

"You really have to be a firm believer in the mission," Karen says. "I asked myself, *Can I add value?*"

With a professional background in marketing, it didn't take long before she was asked to join ShareCare's marketing committee. Although she was already serving on the board of the Leelanau Conservancy at the time, Karen was willing to meet, brainstorm, and lend her expertise. Soon after, she joined the ShareCare Board of Directors, where she served for several years.

One of the accomplishments she is most proud of is ShareCare's rebranding work during her time on the board—helping the organization better reflect its mission and reach more people

who need support. Just as meaningful to Karen was the camaraderie of the board itself: passionate, mission-driven people working together for the good of others.

After her board service, Karen made the decision to step back and focus on her novel, *The Lost Woman*, while continuing to support ShareCare as a committed advocate. Writing has always been a part of who she is. Even as a child, she dreamed of being a writer.

The idea for her first novel took shape while Karen was working at a bank. She completed her first draft in 2016, later honing her craft through Interlochen's novel-writing course and working with an instructor on her first edit.

When asked why people should become ShareCare members today, Karen's answer is simple and heartfelt: peace of mind.

"No matter what you need, at some point, ShareCare can be your first call," she says. "And if they can't do it themselves, they'll help you find someone who can."

Karen's book is available through Amazon and at local bookstores across the Leelanau Peninsula. As for her life now? She describes it as "the life I've always dreamed of"—rooted in community, creativity, and purpose.

Volunteer Profile

by Susan Ager

Susan Ager is a retired journalist who moved to Northport from downstate in 2001.



DAVID HARRIS

David Harris became intrigued with stories of the past by listening to his parents. His father's family immigrated from Hungary. His mother left Poland as a young woman, a year before the Nazi invasion, planning to bring along her parents and four sisters.

Both parents and two sisters were murdered at Auschwitz. Two sisters survived, David's aunts.

Decades later now, after a career teaching history and teaching teachers how to teach history, David knows how to listen to the strangers he meets volunteering for ShareCare.

For half a decade he drove dozens of strangers to appointments, mostly medical, in his white Chevy Trailblazer, posing questions over hill and dale. Listening. Nodding. Appreciating.

He is a new octogenarian, and ShareCare asks those who turn 80 to choose ways besides driving to help. David didn't hesitate when volunteer coordinator Jennie Arguello wondered if he might visit members with dementia, to give brief breaks to their caregivers.

"I had no experience at all" helping those with dementia, he recalls, except to note the decline of acquaintances.

He took a day-long training class from ShareCare in respite care. He summoned his curiosity. Since July he has visited two people with dementia, one several times. That man, a former traveling salesman, has opened up to David, showing off his mementos, talking more than David expected. Jennie asks for commitments of two hours. Sometimes he stays three.

He says of all the strangers he has helped, with rides or visits: "How appreciative they are!" And how grateful they seem to engage in conversation about their past, and not about the weather."

David and his wife, Marcia, met in high school in Chicago. Both were hall guards. He asked her for a date on the October week in 1962 when the Cuban Missile Crisis broke, which historians say is the closest the US has ever come to nuclear war. At 17 years old, he approached Marcia, who was 15, and said, "If we're still here on Saturday, want to go out with me?"

The crisis passed. The affection endured. They are still together 63 years later, with two children and four grandchildren.

They attended the University of Wisconsin together, where David majored in history, taught in that state for several years, then moved to the University of Michigan, where David retired as a professor of teacher development.

A friend recommended Leelanau County as a vacation spot and David remembers clearly the first time they drove up as a family, crossing the narrows between Big and Little Glen Lakes. "I remember just being struck by the beauty of the place, and I've been unstruck."

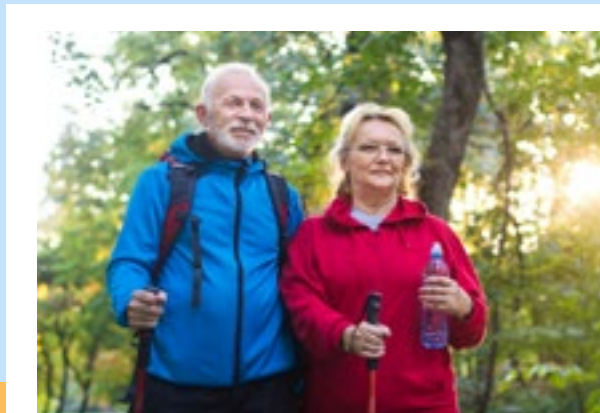
By 2004 they had bought property, built a home in Glen Arbor, sold their Birmingham place and moved up full-time.

Why did he retire so young, at 59? "I'd been working my whole life, starting as a kid in my father's grocery store. All our parents died very young, from 56 to 66. We thought we probably wouldn't live long, so we should retire early rather than late."

He dove into the life of the community, elected to the Glen Lake School Board, president of his neighborhood association, volunteering for the Leelanau Conservancy and the Sleeping Bear Heritage Trail. Now he has cut back, occasionally biking the trail to advise visitors, but focusing on ShareCare.

Asked if volunteering for ShareCare was for everyone, he said, "Why not? It's a pleasure. It's gratifying. And it's neighborly, too."

Do you live with chronic pain and sometimes feel lonely?



We are testing a pain self-management program called **SCOOP** (Strengthening Connections to Overcome Pain) to help people with chronic pain live better and strengthen their social connections.

Who can participate?

Adults, 60 years and over, with chronic pain AND who sometimes feel lonely. Participation is completely voluntary.

How much will I be paid?

You will receive up to \$50 in checks for completing 2 telephone-based surveys. Program and materials are provided for free.

You will be randomly placed into one of two groups:



A 7-week program with podcasts (audio recordings) and weekly telephone sessions led by a Community Health Worker

--- OR ---



A control group that receives SCOOP materials and a workshop after the final survey

To Learn More...

Call: 1-844-456-4668

Email: SCOOP-info@umich.edu

Or scan the QR code to be contacted by staff!





*During our Spring Volunteer Enrichment Training, ShareCare volunteers and staff viewed two videos about ageism. One of the videos featured Ashton Applewhite, the author of the book, *This Chair Rocks*. Her video provided food for thought and offered a refreshing and empowering perspective on aging. In the article below she succinctly sums up how easy it is to overlook ageism and how we can all benefit one another by educating ourselves on this extremely important topic.*

What is Ageism? by Ashton Applewhite

Ageism is stereotyping and discrimination on the basis of a person's age. We experience it any time someone assumes that we're "too old" for something—a task, a haircut, a relationship—instead of finding out who we are and what we're capable of. Or "too young;" ageism cuts both ways, although in a youth-obsessed society elders bear the brunt of it. Like racism and sexism, ageism serves a social and economic purpose: to legitimize and sustain inequalities between groups. It's not about how we look. It's about how people in power assign meaning to how we look. Stereotyping—the assumption that all members of a group are the same—underlies ageism (as it does all "isms"). Stereotyping is always a mistake, but especially when it comes to age, because the older we get, the more different from one another we become. Attitudes about age—as well as race and gender—start to form in early childhood. Over a lifetime they harden into a set of truths: "just the way it is." Unless we challenge ageist stereotypes—*Old people are incompetent. Wrinkles are ugly. It's sad to be old*—we feel shame and embarrassment instead of taking pride in the accomplishment of aging. That's internalized ageism. By blinding us to the benefits of aging and heightening our fears, ageism makes growing older far harder than it has to be. It damages our sense of self, segregates us, diminishes our prospects, and actually shortens lives. What are the antidotes?

Awareness: the critical starting point is to acknowledge our own prejudices about age and aging. Then we can start to see that "personal problems"—such as not being able to get a job or being belittled or feeling patronized—are actually widely shared social problems that require collective action.

Integration: connect with people of all ages. An equitable society for all ages requires intergenerational collaboration.

Activism: watch for ageist behaviors and attitudes in and around us, challenge them, and create language and models that support every stage of life.

If you find this topic interesting and would like more information, please visit Ashton's website where you can watch videos, read blogs and enjoy fresh ideas on the wonderful process of aging. <https://thischairrocks.com/>

DRIVERS NEEDED

New Year

Volunteer!

**Local Seniors value the rides
ShareCare provides.**

Volunteer when it fits your schedule.

**Please contact ShareCare
231-256-0221 ext. 304
info@sharecareleelanau.org**

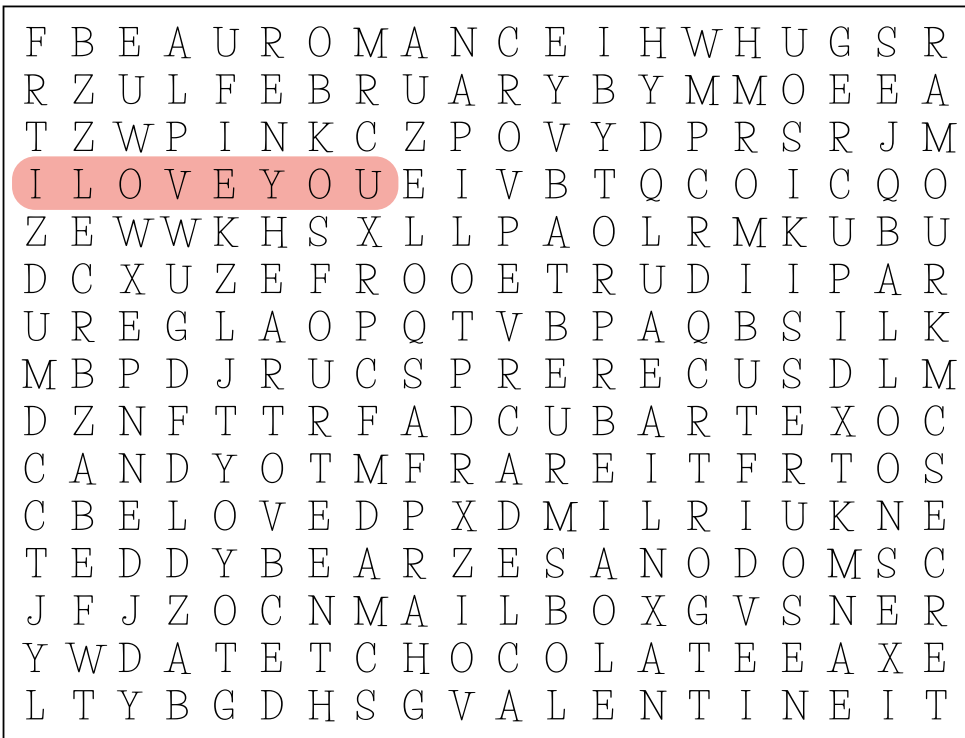
ShareCare

ShareCareLeelanau.org



Puzzle

Valentine's Day



- | | | | | |
|-----------|----------|------------|------------|-------------|
| Roses | Amour | Beloved | Lovebirds | Bouquet |
| Admirer | Date | Fourteenth | Beau | Celebration |
| Pink | February | Truelove | Romance | Hugs |
| Valentine | Secret | Ring | Chocolate | Cupid |
| Mailbox | Heart | Candy | I love you | Perfume |
| Kiss | Balloons | Cards | Teddy bear | Candles |



Enjoy some winter **SUNSHINE** with free Friendly Phone Calls or In Person Visits from a ShareCare volunteer.

Call Jennie at 231-256-0221 ext. 304 for more information.





RIDE REQUEST PROTOCOL

**CALL THE RIDE LINE 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

Please provide us with as much advanced notice as possible for your requests. All requests must be submitted a minimum of **5 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. 304.**

ShareCare

THANKS *the following organizations for their support*

Atwill Memorial Chapel Association

Cherryland Electric Cooperative

Comfort Keepers

Community Foundation Rotary Endowment

Grand Traverse Regional Community Foundation

Leelanau County Senior Services

Leelanau Township Community Foundation

Michigan Health Endowment Fund

Philip S Harper Foundation

Oryana

Marshall & Bruce Law Firm, P.C.

Grand Traverse Elder Law Firm

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



DONATE NOW

to support Leelanau County seniors!

www.ShareCareLeelanau.org (scan the QR code) or mail a check to **ShareCare PO BOX 157, Suttons Bay, MI 49682.**



PO Box 157 | 99 Fourth Street
Suttons Bay, MI 49682

ShareCare

THE CONNECTOR

OUR MISSION:

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

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.

BOARD MEMBERS:

Dale Lersch, *President*
Clifford Hale, MD, *Vice President*
Diana Burton, *Secretary*
Tom Petersen, *Treasurer*
Pam Agee
Jan Rygwelski, MD
Michael J Sheehan
Matt Marske

STAFF:

Dawn Bousamra, *Executive Director*
Jennie Arguello, *Volunteer Manager*
Erin Gysbers, *Senior Wellness Liaison*
Marti Alexander, *Administrative Assistant*

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