



# The Sentinel

## N E W S L E T T E R



### Welcome New Board Members!



Barbara Wotjczak

We held our Annual Meeting and elected our RVSC 2024-2025 Board of Directors on October 17. I would like to introduce our new members.

**Dianne Kirk** is a life-long resident of our community. She holds an Associate Degree in Business from Lake Michigan College. She currently serves on the

RVSC Hospitality Committee and participates in weekly Craft Classes at the center. Dianne also works with Jane Sherwin, RN at our monthly Foot Clinic. She is all about her family and serving our seniors.

**Elizabeth Palulis** is currently president of the River Valley Garden Club, a post she has held since 2009. Elizabeth holds a Bachelor of Science Degree in Education and a Master of Education in Library Science/Instructional Media Degree. She was an elementary school teacher and librarian for 18 years. Elizabeth has been heavily involved in activities for children and seniors for most of her life.

**Sandy Rosenthal** has served her community wherever she has lived. She was on the Board of Directors for the Neighborhood Boys and Girls Club in Chicago, serving on their Marketing Committee. Currently, she is a fundraising volunteer for the American Legion. Much of her career was spent as a regional manager working in Food Service Manufacturing. Sandy has coordinated and planned events and trips for large groups of people. She looks forward to serving and supporting the seniors in our area.

We hope that all of you are enjoying the fall season and getting ready for winter. As we prepare for the holiday season, let's remember those who may not be doing well.

We care about all of you. *- Barb Wotjczak*

### Senior Choir Sing-a-long & Christmas Tree Lighting Friday, Dec. 6 at 11 am

Join the River Valley Senior Choir to help us welcome the holiday season. The Senior Choir has been practicing for many months and would love to have you join them.

The leader of the choir is Rev. Tom Fischer, a recently retired Lutheran pastor. Tom currently teaches piano at the School of American Music in Three Oaks and leads the choir at the senior center every Tuesday afternoon.

Refreshments will be served. Please call **(269) 469-4556** for reservations by **December 3**. For those interested, the movie *Prancer*, filmed in Three Oaks, will follow the tree lighting.



### Toys for Tots

Toys for Tots is a program run by the United States Marine Corps Reserve since 1980. It distributes new, unwrapped toys to children whose parents cannot afford to buy them gifts for Christmas. The gift of a new toy or book brings Christmas joy and sends a message of hope to many of America's disadvantaged children. Our box will be located in the Senior Center entrance by **November 1**. Please drop off new, unwrapped toys in this box by **December 6**.



*RVSC Mission Statement: To offer residents of our service area who are 60 years and older a range of educational, recreational, social, transportation, and referral services.*

## HOLIDAY CLOSINGS

The River Valley Senior Center  
will be closed for the  
Christmas Holidays:

**Tuesday, December 24**  
**Wednesday, December 25**  
**Wednesday, January 1, 2025**

We will reopen on Thursday, January 2, 2025.

## Volunteers Needed for AARP Tax Aide Team

### FREE TAX HELP

Provided by AARP Volunteers



The mission of the AARP Foundation Tax-Aide is to provide "free tax assistance to those who need it most." To accomplish this mission, we offer tax return assistance free of charge to any Michigan resident, but with a special

focus on taxpayers who are over age 50 with low to moderate income. The Tax Aide volunteers are located nationwide and are trained and are IRS certified every year. The River Valley Senior Center is proud to partner with the AARP Foundation to provide this free service. Each year, our local Tax Team of Volunteers spends hundred of hours in training and then preparing the individual tax returns for our community's seniors.

So how does tax preparation work? Taxpayers are scheduled for an appointment. At that time, they bring their tax information to the senior center and are interviewed by a certified volunteer. The taxpayer's information and documents are left with the volunteers to prepare the tax return. When the return is completed, the taxpayer returns to the senior center, where a volunteer explains the return, obtains the taxpayer's signature, and gives the taxpayer a copy of the return along with all the taxpayer's documents. A limited number of appointments will be available.

**Please Note:** To volunteer or ask questions, please call the River Valley Senior Center at **(269) 469-4556**.

We will begin scheduling tax return appointments in late January 2025.



## Weekly Recurring Activities

### Monday

9 am - Exercise Class (LL)  
1:30 pm - Yoga, Chair (LL)  
2:30 pm - Yoga, Beginners (LL)

### Tuesday

9 am - Crafts (call for reservations) (LL)  
10 am - Essentrics Exercise (LL) (will not meet 12/3)  
10 am - TOPS 12/10 (UL)  
1 pm - Cribbage (UL)  
2 pm - Choir (LL)

### Wednesday

9 am - Exercise Class (LL)  
10 am - Exercise Class (LL)  
12:30 pm - Monthly Commodities (2nd Wed.)  
12:30 pm - Quarterly Commodities  
(3rd Wed.) Nov., February, May, and August  
1 pm - Line Dancing (LL)  
1 pm - Cards/games (UL)  
1 pm - Wii Bowling

### Thursday

1 pm - Cribbage (UL)  
1:30 pm - Tai Chi (LL) 6 sessions \$48  
2 pm - Alzheimer's Caregiver Support (UL)

### Friday

9 am - Exercise Class (LL)  
10 am - Exercise Class (LL)  
10:45 am - Blood Pressure Checks (UL)  
1:30 pm - Knitting & Crocheting (LL)

If you want to experience  
the true meaning of Christmas,  
give something to someone  
who can offer nothing in return.

—Toni Sorenson

## Bad Weather Closings

If you are not sure whether the senior center is open due to the weather, please watch TV Channel 16, Channel 22, or listen to the radio: News radio 960, Sunny 101.5, Oldies 94.3, and Real Country 99.9 for announcements. A good rule of thumb is that if the **River Valley School District** is **closed due to weather**, the Senior Center will also be closed.



## Watercolor: Perry Penguin Tuesday, December 17, 12:00 pm



December Project: Perry Penguin

Join Roy and Peg Hruska, who are both Madden Certified Teachers. Classes are geared to those who have never tried watercolor before or who like the loose paintings of TV teacher, Terry Madden.

Create something beautiful in a relaxed, positive, and fun atmosphere.

Cost is **\$20 per session**, and everything you need is provided for your finished painting. Please call **(269) 469-4556** for your reservation.

What if Christmas, he thought,  
doesn't come from a store?  
What if Christmas, perhaps,  
means a little bit more?

—Dr. Seuss

## Warm Hands, Warm Feet

It's time to prepare "The Giving Tree" to help those in need keep warm during the winter months. Help us decorate the tree with hats, scarfs, mittens, gloves, and socks for children and adults in our service area who are in need (children and adult sizes). Items for the tree should be new and not gift wrapped. The tree will be up on **November 7**, and items must be donated by **December 6**.



## Foot Care Clinic—Only 1 visit this month Monday, December 16, 8 am

RVSC offers Foot Clinic services by Jane Sherwin, RN of Blessed Feet, LLC. Prior to receiving services, you must bring a signed release form from your Health Care Provider. No exceptions. If you are a new Foot Clinic client, please call **(269) 469-4556** to have one mailed to you. A patient's first visit is \$40, and their return visit is \$30. The Foot Clinic is by **appointment only**.



## RVSC Christmas Party Bingo Friday, December 13, 11 am

**Lunch and Christmas gift exchange.** Gifts should be at least a **\$2 gift**. Please call **(269) 469-4556** for reservations by **December 5**.



## Neighbor by Neighbor



Need help with food, rent, utilities, car or home repairs? Call Neighbor by Neighbor at **(269) 231-0648**. Neighbor by Neighbor links residents of Chikaming, New Buffalo, Three Oaks Township, the Village of Three Oaks, and the City of New Buffalo with resources and services. We have access to funds to keep people from getting behind on rent/mortgage payments, and/or utility bills. There are no age restrictions on who we serve. We will serve those of any age within our boundaries who are at or below 225% of the federal poverty level.

## Important Service Numbers

- Alzheimer's Help Line 1-800-272-3900
- Area Agency on Aging 1-800-654-2810
- Benton Harbor VA Clinic 1-269-934-9123
- Elder Abuse Prevention 1-855-444-3911
- Eldercare Locator 1-800-677-1116
- Lakeshore Legal Aid 1-888-783-8190
- Long Term Care Ombudsman 1-866-485-9393
- Medicaid Hotline 1-800-642-3195
- Medicare Questions 1-800-633-4227
- Medicare/Medicaid Asst. Prog. 1-800-803-7174
- Northern Indiana V.A. Clinic 1-574-272-9000
- PACE 1-855-243-8876
- Senior Nutrition Service 1-855-925-0137
- Social Security 1-800-772-1213
- Telemarketer: 1-888-382-1222  
Do Not Call

# RIVER VALLEY SENIOR CENTER — DECEMBER 2024

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
<b>2</b> 9:00 & 10:00 Exercise (LL) 1:30 Yoga, Chair 2:30 Yoga, Beginners	<b>3</b> 9:00 Crafts (UL) 10:00 TOPS (UL) <b>10:00 No Essentrics (LL)</b> 1:00 Cribbage – (UL) <b>2:00 Choir (LL)</b>	<b>4</b> 9:00 & 10:00 Exercise (LL) 1:00 Line Dancing (LL) 1:00 Cards / Games (UL) 1:00 Wii Bowling (UL)	<b>5</b> 1:00 Cribbage (UL) 1:30 Tai Chi (LL) 2:00 Alzheimer's Support Group	<b>6</b> 9:00 & 10:00 Exercise (LL) 10:45 BP Check (UL) <b>11:00 Christmas Tree Lighting—Sing-a-long (UL)</b> <b>2:30 Movie - Prancer</b> 1:30 Knitting & Crochet LL
<b>9</b> 9:00 & 10:00 Exercise (LL) 1:30 Yoga, Chair 2:30 Yoga, Beginners	<b>10</b> 9:00 Crafts (UL) 10:00 TOPS (UL) <b>10:00 Essentrics (LL)</b> 1:00 Cribbage – (UL) <b>2:00 Choir (LL)</b>	<b>11</b> 9:00 & 10:00 Exercise (LL) <b>12:00 Monthly Commodities</b> 1:00 Line Dancing (LL) 1:00 Cards / Games (UL) 1:00 Wii Bowling (UL)	<b>12</b> <b>11:00 Vision Seekers</b> 1:00 Cribbage (UL) 1:30 Tai Chi (LL) 2:00 Alzheimer's Support Group	<b>13</b> 9:00 & 10:00 Exercise (LL) 10:45 BP Check (UL) <b>11:00 Bingo: - Christmas Party RVSC with lunch</b> 10:45 BP Check (UL) 1:30 Knitting & Crochet (LL)
<b>16</b> <b>8:00 Foot Clinic by Appt. (UL)</b> 9:00 & 10:00 Exercise (LL) 1:30 Yoga, Chair 2:30 Yoga, Beginners	<b>17</b> 9:00 Crafts (UL) <b>10:00 Essentrics (LL)</b> 12:00 Watercolor 1:00 Cribbage – (UL) <b>2:00 Choir (LL)</b>	<b>18</b> 9:00 & 10:00 Exercise (LL) 1:00 Line Dancing (LL) 1:00 Cards/Games (UL) 1:00 Wii Bowling (UL)	<b>19</b> <b>10:00 Board Meeting (UL)</b> 1:00 Cribbage (UL) 1:30 Tai Chi (LL) 2:00 Alzheimer's Support Group	<b>20</b> 9:00 & 10:00 Exercise (LL) 10:45 Blood Press.Cks (UL) 1:30 Knitting & Crochet (LL)
<b>23</b> 9:00 & 10:00 Exercise (LL) 1:30 Yoga, Chair (LL) 2:30 Yoga, Beginners (LL)	<b>24</b>  <b>Closed</b>	<b>25</b>  <b>Closed</b>	<b>26</b> <b>9:00 Newsletter Folding (LL)</b> 1:00 Cribbage (UL) 1:30 Tai Chi (LL) 2:00 Alzheimer's Support Group	<b>27</b> 9:00 & 10:00 Exercise (LL) 10:45 BP Check (UL) 1:30 Knitting & Crochet (LL)
<b>30</b> 9:00 & 10:00 Exercise (LL) 1:30 Yoga, Chair (LL) 2:30 Yoga, Beginners (LL)	<b>31</b> 9:00 Crafts (UL) <b>10:00 Essentrics (LL)</b> 1:00 Cribbage – (UL) <b>2:00 Choir (LL)</b>		Senior Nutrition Services Lunch is served at <b>11:30 am.</b> Seniors eat in the (LL) of the center. Please call Mary McCormick at <b>269-426-0912</b> before 10 a.m. the day before you want your meal.	<b>LOCATION KEY</b> (LL) = Lower Level (UL) = Upper Level



# DECEMBER 2024

MEALS ON WHEELS OF SOUTHWEST MICHIGAN  
HOME DELIVERED, CONGREGATE, PACE MENU

YOUR  
DONATION  
TOWARD THE  
COST OF A  
MEAL HELPS  
TO KEEP OUR  
MEAL  
PROGRAM IN  
PLACE.  
PLEASE BE AS  
GENEROUS AS  
YOU CAN!  
WE THANK  
YOU!



**MEALS on WHEELS**  
— OF SOUTHWEST MICHIGAN —  
Senior Nutrition Services Region IV

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
2 Spaghetti w/ Meat Sauce Steamed Green Beans Mandarin Oranges	3 Cod over Rice Mixed Vegetables Green Peas Fruited Jello	4 Turkey Burger on a Bun w/ Lettuce/Tomato/Mayo Capri Blend Veg Fruit Cocktail	5 Egg Casserole w/ Veggies & Hashbrowns Sausage Links Baked Apples w/ Raisins	6 Italian Chicken Quarters Seasoned Potatoes Steamed Spinach Peaches
9 Sweet & Sour Meatballs over Rice Oriental Veg Blend Pineapple Tidbits	10 Chicken Tender Tortilla Wrap w/ Cream Sauce Stewed Tomatoes Lima Beans Peaches	11 Chili w/Sweet Potatoes Green Peas Crackers Diced Pear Cup	12 Orange Cranberry Dijon Pork Loin Roast Rice Pilaf Steamed Carrots Fruit Crisp	13 Roasted Chicken Buttered Noodles Broccoli Grapes
16 Ravioli w/ Creamy Squash Sauce 5 Way Blend Vegetables Fruit Crisp	17 Beef Enchilada Bake Spanish Rice Black Beans Fruit Cocktail	18 Chicken Picatta Bake Green Beans Mandarin Oranges	19 Stuffed Green Pepper w/ Rice & Tomatoes Steamed Corn Banana	20 Roast Beef w/ Gravy over Mashed Potatoes Green Bean Casserole Creamed Corn Holiday Dessert
23 Scalloped Potatoes w/ Ham Wax Beans Beets Yogurt w/ Fruit			26 Meatloaf w/ Mashed Potatoes Peas & Carrots Tropical Mixed Fruit	27 Stuffed Cabbage Roll over Rice California Blend Veggies Apple Birthday Cake
30 Tuna Noodle Casserole Normandy Blend Grapes	31 Sausage Ratatouille Steamed Rice Mandarin/Pineapple Cream Salad			Meals provide: (weekly average) 800 Calories 75 grams Carbohydrate 19 grams Protein Less than 30% Calories from

## Monthly Commodities

**Wednesday, December 11, 12:30–2 pm**

The Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP) works to improve the health of low-income persons who are at least 60 years of age by supplementing their diets with nutritious USDA foods. Any senior who meets federal income guidelines can come on the second Wednesday of the month and pick up their food allotment. Pick up time is from **12:30 pm–2 pm**. For more information, please call **(269) 469-4556**.

## Mobile Food Pantry Schedule

### Feeding America's West Michigan Foodbank

- **Tuesday, December 3, 3:30 pm**  
Harbert Community Church
- **Wednesday, December 4, 4:30 pm**  
Woodland Shores Baptist Church
- **Monday, December 23, 4:00 pm**  
Galien American Legion
- **Cupboard Mobile Food Pantry**

This food pantry serves those who meet federal guidelines and live in the service areas of Bridgman, Baroda, Stevensville, Glendora, New Troy, Sawyer, and St. Joseph.

- ♦ **Location: Bridgman Fire Department or Woodland Shores Baptist Church in Bridgman** during the summer months.  
**Thursdays, 10 am–12 pm and 6:15 pm–7:30 pm.**  
**First and third Sundays** of each month.
- ♦ **Location: Bread of Life Food Pantry at Our Lady Queen of Peace Church, 3903 Lake Street, Bridgman.**  
**Tues. 10 am–12 Noon.**

## Drive A Van for River Valley Senior Center

Do you know that the Senior Center provides transportation for medical, shopping, and other necessary trips from seniors' homes (for those over 60 years) within our service area?

If you are someone who enjoys visiting with seniors and driving, then we are looking for you. Our pool of drivers have provided over 1,000 trips this year. We need a few more drivers to volunteer their time. Our staff will work hard to accommodate your schedule. Come to the senior center, talk to other drivers, and learn what it takes to be a valuable van driver. Call Susan Buckingham at **(269) 469-4556** for more information.



## Board of Directors' Meeting

**Thursday, December 19, 10 am**

The River Valley Senior Center Board of Directors' will hold their **monthly meeting** in the **Upper Level** of the Senior Center at **10 am**. All are welcome.

## Newsletter Folding

**Thursday, December 26, 9 am**

We fold newsletters in the lower level at 9 am. Open to anyone with a willingness to volunteer. It's a great time to work with your friends.

### Thank You!

- All van drivers
- All Center volunteers
- Facebook support:  
Marci Stephenson  
Diane Kirk, Sharon Phillips



## Telephone Reassurance

The Senior Center has a Telephone Reassurance Program for those that live alone and would appreciate a daily call to check on their welfare. **If you would appreciate receiving a call**, or have an elderly relative who lives alone and would be reassured to hear a friendly voice on a daily basis, please **call the Senior Center at (269) 469-4556**. If you would like to **be a volunteer caller**, please **call the Senior Center at (269) 469-4556**.

## Transportation & Services

**Please allow 10-14 business days advance notice to reserve transportation. Emergency service will be addressed on a case-by-case basis.**

The Senior Center provides many services for those 60 years and older. They include transportation for medical, shopping, and other necessary trips. The Center has a wide service area that includes Bridgman, New Buffalo, Lakeside, Union Pier, Sawyer, Harbert, Three Oaks, New Troy, Grand Beach and Galien. Call **(269) 469-4556** to make a transportation reservation.

Our volunteer drivers will see that you get to your doctor's appointment located in Berrien County, LaPorte, Michigan City and parts of South Bend on time between 8:30 am and 1 pm (Eastern Standard Time).



## Good Times at the Senior Center



# Holiday Tunes

Away in a Manger  
Choir of the Bells  
Dominick the Donkey  
Frosty the Snowman  
Holly Jolly Christmas  
Jingle Bell Rock  
Jingle Bells  
Let it Snow  
Little Drummer Boy  
Little St Nick  
O Holy Night  
Rudolph  
Santa Baby  
Silent Nigh  
Silver Bells  
The Christmas Song  
The First Noel  
Winter Wonderland

Chicken Scratch NY

S	G	R	D	A	M	A	F	C	I	F	Z	Z	X	F	K	U	H	J	X
W	A	W	A	Y	O	B	R	E	M	M	U	R	D	E	L	T	T	I	L
C	K	M	B	H	P	L	O	D	U	R	J	T	G	J	I	H	Z	N	O
Z	D	W	T	Z	E	D	S	Y	E	L	C	B	Y	R	T	G	C	G	K
G	N	O	S	S	A	M	T	S	I	R	H	C	E	H	T	I	J	L	L
Q	A	N	K	O	I	D	Y	A	L	F	D	G	I	R	L	N	B	E	D
X	L	S	O	X	Q	R	T	B	T	I	N	W	X	N	E	T	O	B	J
D	R	T	J	T	I	R	H	V	A	A	H	X	I	P	S	N	A	E	W
F	E	I	F	W	V	T	E	C	M	B	E	U	U	B	T	E	S	L	S
N	D	T	U	C	C	H	S	A	Y	A	A	I	N	S	N	L	C	L	Q
B	N	E	V	X	E	G	N	X	I	L	M	T	R	I	I	I	Y	R	W
F	O	L	N	I	A	I	O	Z	T	K	L	I	N	X	C	S	J	O	U
B	W	V	E	S	Y	N	W	K	M	G	F	O	O	A	K	T	E	C	N
G	R	O	K	A	C	Y	M	V	Z	E	U	A	J	Y	S	L	D	K	U
M	E	Q	W	Q	O	L	A	O	H	K	P	I	T	Y	K	B	N	M	Q
G	T	A	P	U	I	O	N	T	S	L	L	E	B	E	L	G	N	I	J
L	N	F	G	C	Z	H	N	S	L	L	E	B	R	E	V	L	I	S	E
I	I	Y	E	K	N	O	D	E	H	T	K	C	I	N	I	M	O	D	S
L	W	B	T	K	S	L	L	E	B	E	H	T	F	O	R	I	O	H	C
U	I	M	U	Y	F	C	J	H	B	X	B	V	R	U	M	Q	C	Y	B

**River Valley Senior Center**  
**P.O. Box 275**  
**13321 Red Arrow Highway**  
**Harbert, MI 49115**



NON-PROFIT  
ORGANIZATION  
US POSTAGE  
PAID  
HARBERT, MI  
PERMIT No.2

**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**

Website: [www.rvseniorcenter.org](http://www.rvseniorcenter.org)  
Email: [director@rvseniorcenter.org](mailto:director@rvseniorcenter.org)  
Phone: (269) 469-4556  
Fax: (269) 469-0321  
Hours: Monday-Friday  
7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

**DECEMBER 2024**



 Berrien County Printing

**River Valley Board of Directors**

Barbara Wojtczak, *President*  
Ellie Rogers, *Vice President*  
Sue Rogers & Evia King, *Co-Treasurers*  
Sharon Phillips, *Secretary*  
Curtiss Alvarez  
Marilyn Griffiths  
Diane Kirk  
Dorothy Palen  
Elizabeth Palulis  
Sandy Rosenthal  
Frank Schmidt  
Peggy Wagner  
Tim Hawkins, *Executive Director*



**River Valley Senior Center Staff**

**Tim Hawkins, Executive Director**  
[director@rvseniorcenter.org](mailto:director@rvseniorcenter.org)

**Mike Deeds**  
*Facility Maintenance Technician*

**Donna Pydlek**  
*Health & Wellness Coordinator*  
[healthyseniors@rvseniorcenter.org](mailto:healthyseniors@rvseniorcenter.org)

**Susan Buckingham**  
*Transportation Coordinator*  
[transpo@rvseniorcenter.org](mailto:transpo@rvseniorcenter.org)

**Ashlei Jones**  
*Senior Services Coordinator*  
[services@rvseniorcenter.org](mailto:services@rvseniorcenter.org)

**Brian Rochon**  
*Maintenance Assistant/Custodian*

**Mary McCormick**  
*Senior Nutrition Services Site Manager*