June 2022

LCSC Communicator

Regional News, Views, and Information

LAKES COUNTRY Service Cooperative
Together we achieve

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- MAHUBE-OTWA ASKING FOR HELP IS HARD!
- COOPERATIVE PURCHASING CONNECTION - 2022 PAPER PROGRAM
- COOPERATIVE PURCHASING CONNECTION - PLAYGROUND SURFACING SALE
- SOMEPLACE SAFE OPENS A NEW THRIFT STORE
- KILZER TO LEAD MINNESOTA SERVICE COOPERATIVES
- CAPLP - ENDING HUNGER ON A COLD WINTER DAY
- LSNM OPENS NEW SELF-HELP CLINIC
- PELICAN RAPIDS - FOCUSED ON THE FUTURE
- ALZHEIMER'S ASSOCIATION - WHERE DOES ALZHEIMER'S HIDE?
- LCSC EMPLOYEE RETIREMENTS

LAKES COUNTRY Service Cooperative

CLICK HERE FOR A LISTING OF OUR CURRENT JOB POSTINGS

An equal opportunity employer

GOVERNMENT-
Electronic Edition
Open the full issue
www.lcsc.org

Asking For Help

Is Hard!

An ideal, healthy community provides all residents access to a quality education, safe and healthy homes, adequate employment, transportation, physical activity, nutrition, and quality health care. Community Action Partnerships (CAPs) invest in people and communities by responding to people's immediate and long-term needs and creating healthier communities.

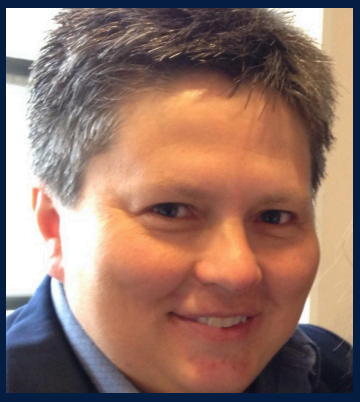
In 1964 President Lyndon Johnson signed the Economic Opportunity Act establishing community action agencies and programs, and today, 24 CAPs serve residents across Minnesota. Three CAPs work to provide positive change for individuals and families in the Lakes Country service area.



continued on next page

Source: Liz Kuoppala, Executive Director - MAHUBE-OTWA, minncap.org, communityactionpartnership.com

Author: Mary Phillipe, LCSC Communications Generalist



Liz Kuoppala,

Executive Director
MAHUBE-OTWA

MAHUBE-OTWA
Community Action Partnership, Inc.
Our Mission.... To Empower People to Achieve Self Sufficiency

I recently met with MAHUBE-OTWA Executive Director Liz Kuoppala to discuss MAHUBE-OTWA's program initiatives and their impact in the five-county service area of Mahnomen, Hubbard, Becker, Otter Tail, and Wadena counties.

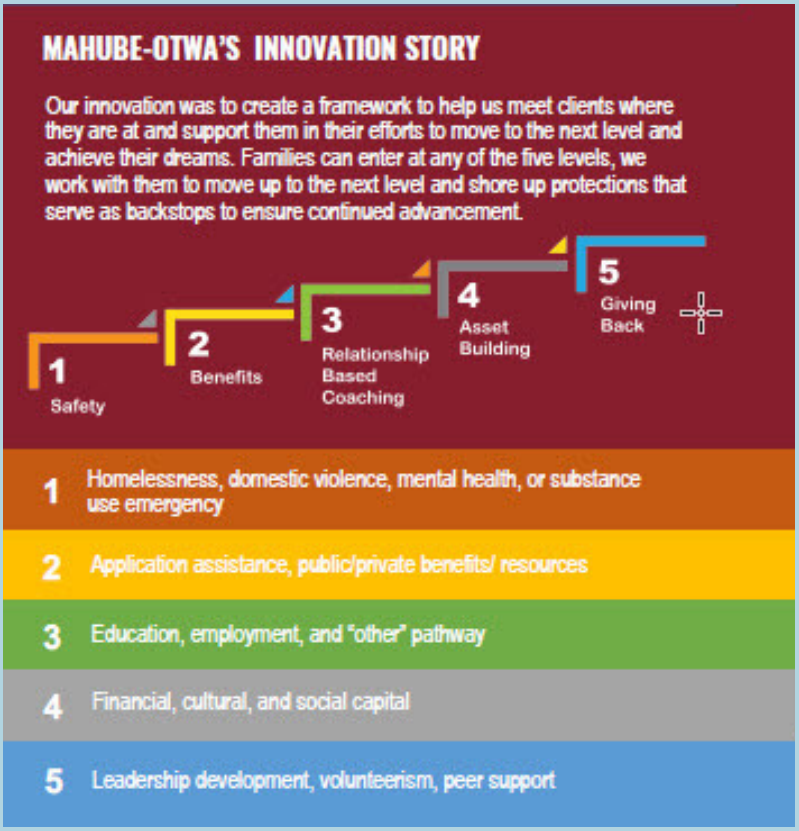
Kuoppala was hired in January of 2017 following the retirement of former Executive Director Leah Pigatti. Kuoppala is passionate about improving lives, and for more than 20 years, she has led organizations and provided advocacy to be more inclusive and effective in creating opportunities for people. When asked about the work and initiatives of MAHUBE-OTWA, Kuoppala stated, “For so long, our approach, when clients came to our door, was taking care of immediate needs. Our services were very siloed and much of our time was spent managing grants and keeping the grant provider satisfied.”

Today, the approach of MAHUBE OTWA is client centered. MAHUBE-OTWA Caseworkers can spend additional time listening to and meeting people where they are at in their lives. This approach is effective at determining all the needs of their clients.

In 2018, MAHUBE-OTWA went through a process called “Journey Mapping." Time was spent interviewing their clients to find out more about meeting their needs and what was needed.

Additional Caseworkers were hired, and the average caseload has been reduced to 15-20 clients. MAHUBE-OTWA works with clients in five critical areas providing individuals and families the tools they need to meet their immediate needs and creating a plan to move them out of crisis and move toward stability and a pathway to success. Clients are assessed first for their overall well-being and safety. The number one priority is to provide immediate assistance if there is a safety concern for the client. Secure and stable living conditions help increase overall client safety. In the past year, MAHUBE-OTWA expanded its hotel/motel model of the homeless shelter to increase master lease apartments to allow clients to stay longer. Coaches were also able to work with clients on sustainable choices. **Sixty-one** percent of shelter guests went from homelessness to permanent housing; **27 percent** went to temporary housing, and **1 percent** to institutional settings. The second level of “Journey Mapping” provides the benefits clients may need for primary issues. Rental assistance, energy assistance, and other emergency assistance needs are where most clients may fall in the five levels. Last year MAHUBE-OTWA assisted **10,140** households with utility payments, **456** households with rental assistance, and **700** children received childcare subsidies.

continued on next page







Level three focuses on relationship-based coaching. Here clients are asked to focus on opportunities for their education, employment, and personal relationships. In the past year, MAHUBE-OTWA assisted 465 families (including 514 children) in moving toward their upward mobility goals.

"When clients are at level four, we work to prevent backsliding," said Kuoppala. Level four is focused on asset building. Here clients can learn how to gain financial literacy, increase assets, and decrease debt. Clients work with their caseworkers to focus on caring for physical assets such as homes and vehicles. Social capital is also seen as an asset.

A network of people we can rely on when emergencies arise, such as an unexpected car repair, childcare, or medical emergency, is crucial to moving toward economic independence.

MAHUBE-OTWA assisted **87** families with financial coaching, **346** people with reproductive health care counseling, **114** seniors with homemaking and chore services to stay in their homes, and **549** households with improved energy efficiency. Research shows that people who volunteer lead longer, healthier, and more fulfilling lives. In level five of MAHUBE-OTWA's Journey Mapping, clients are encouraged to get involved in leadership and volunteer opportunities. In the past year, MAHUBE-OTWA supported the leadership development of **18** low-income parents and youth in serving their community on advisory boards and kept **463** seniors active in volunteer opportunities.

When asked how she defines success, Kuoppala stated, "We have committed to our board to increase participation in our levels by **10 percent** each year. We have seen greater effectiveness and clients moving toward economic independence by increasing our staff and client support. Our funders are pleased with the improved outcomes in programs and support our changes to serve our clients better."

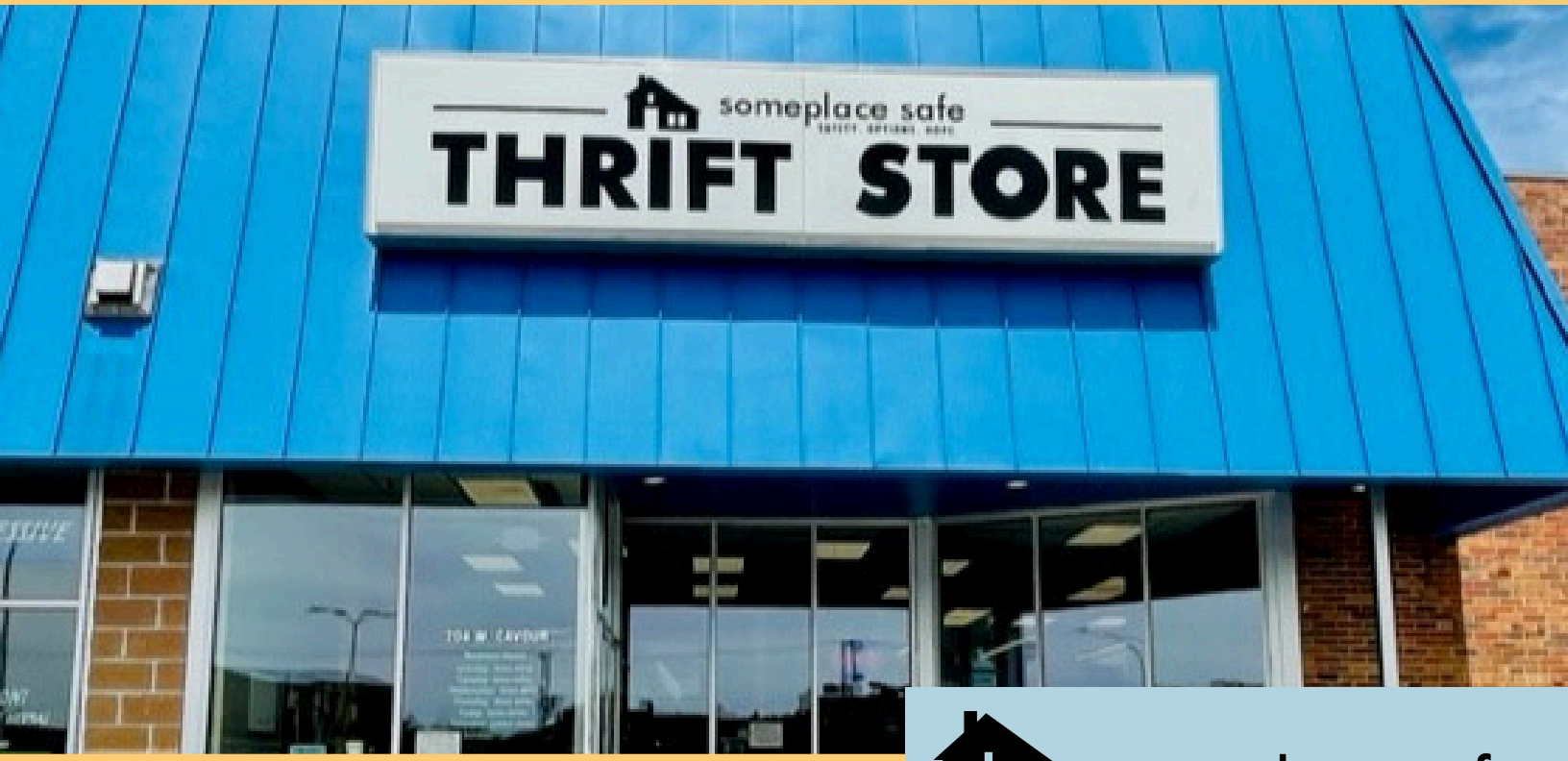
Want to learn more about the "Journey Mapping" model and the support provided by MAHUBE-OTWA? Visit their website for more information and a location near you at mahube.org.

COOPERATIVE Purchasing CONNECTION

2022 PAPER PROGRAM

CPC's 2022 Paper Program is now live! This year we're offering Boise X-9 and Xerographic brands for white copy paper!





On March 1, 2022, Someplace Safe opened a new thrift store location in Fergus Falls.

This recently opened store and the agency's other thrift store locations in Alexandria and Morris help Someplace Safe raise funding and support for agency programming and services.



The three stores also provide needed clothing, household items, and furniture to victims and survivors who need such after experiencing crime or abuse.

In addition, Someplace Safe Thrift Stores partner with other local agencies to provide community members who are experiencing hardships with store vouchers in their time of need.

Emily Egersdorf, Manager of the Someplace Safe Fergus Falls Thrift Store, shared, "the store is an exciting addition to the Fergus Falls community. It's a place to provide fun finds for local shoppers and much-needed items for survivors of crime through the voucher system. We are so grateful for the support of the community and partner programs." Emily added, "I would like to thank the many generous donors and enthusiastic shoppers who have stopped by. The community gave the new store a very warm welcome this spring."

someplace safe
SAFETY. OPTIONS. HOPE.

The store is currently hiring for a variety of positions. Check out this new and exciting career opportunity at someplacesafe.info. In addition, volunteers are always welcome. To get started, simply call the store at 218-503-2156 or stop by at 204 W Cavour in Fergus Falls.

If you haven't had a chance, stop in to visit. New inventory is featured daily, thanks to the generous donations from community members of gently used clothing, furniture, home décor, kitchen and household items, toys, and much more!

For more details about all Someplace Safe Thrift Store locations, visit Someplace Safe online at **www.someplacesafe.info** or find us on **Facebook** or **Instagram**.

Source/Author: Ashley Zach, Someplace Safe Director of Development & Communications

KILZER TO LEAD MINNESOTA SERVICE COOPERATIVES



With a mission to support regional entities in achieving more together than they can on their own, Anne Kilzer has been named the Executive Director of Minnesota Services Cooperatives (MSC).

Kilzer has extensive experience working in the public and government sectors, including serving with two members of the Minnesota Congressional Delegation, 15 years with the Minnesota Association of Workforce Boards and Association of Minnesota Counties, and most recently as the director of workforce development in Hennepin and Carver counties.

"I'm coming into this with experience at various levels of government and a desire to help bring all parties together for the greater good of Minnesota's educational systems and its people."

MSC is a joint powers organization comprised of nine service cooperatives. Each of the nine service cooperatives are geographically distributed across the state and serve members in their respective areas. Each agency has a unique understanding their communities' strengths and needs, and use these insights to positively impact and improve outcomes.

The service cooperatives facilitate planning on a regional basis and assist in meeting clients' specific needs in participating governmental units, which a service cooperative could better provide than by members themselves.

> **I am excited to build on my previous work in statewide partnerships through this position at MSC.**
> - Anne Kilzer

Kilzer said she would like to further develop partnerships between service cooperatives and help them deepen their relationships with other government entities, partners, and state agencies. For example, Kilzer pointed out the collaboration between the Minnesota Department of Education, the service cooperatives, and their assigned regional school districts when distributing personal protection equipment during the pandemic.

"Minnesota Service Cooperatives have a long history of stepping up to collaborate with and support organizations in their communities and to provide needed resources in their regions," Kilzer added. "This is exactly what we need more of in our state. I want to help the nine cooperatives leverage their strengths to inform and align statewide efforts where it makes sense, even further to benefit Minnesota's cities, counties, and school districts."

Source/Author: Anne Kilzer, Executive Director, Minnesota Service Cooperatives

Ending Hunger

ON A COLD WINTER DAY

Three food drops were held in Wilkin County communities in partnership with North Country Food Bank on December 17, 2021.

Just before the holidays, the food drops brought forth a genuine community effort. Space was provided by RDO Equipment in Breckenridge, the Campbell Community Center, and the Rothsay Event Center.

It was a bitterly cold day, and volunteers were grateful to have warm locations to distribute food.

Campbell Lions members were instrumental in supplying forklifts to move the pallets of food. **Five hundred fifty-seven** people received food across the three sites. Many younger family members and neighbors delivered food to older adults who could not make it. Some individuals even arrived by taxi to receive food.

If it were not for the food drop, many children would not have had nutritious meals because of the holiday vacation from school and the inability to receive the daily hot lunch.

continued on next page

Many families shed tears of joy as their cars were loaded with delicious and nutritious food for the holiday season.



ITEMS IN THE FOOD DISTRIBUTION INCLUDED

- full ham
- fresh milk
- assorted cereals
- rice
- pastas
- condiments
- fresh potatoes
- soups
- beans
- canned chicken
- bottled water
- household cleaners
- soaps
- Girl Scout cookies
- flavored sparkling water

> We are so grateful for the community support to help us make this mobile drop happen and get this food out to families and friends in need. The extra food during the holiday season can make a difference to families who have budgets that are already stretched to the max.
>
> *- Susie Novak Boelter, Executive Director, North Country Food Bank, Inc.*



CAPLP & North Country Food Bank staff preparing for the food drop.

The Lakes and Prairie Community Action Partnership (CAPLP) team could not have successfully served so many people without volunteers helping families!
St. Mary's School in Breckenridge, Rothsay Public Schools, and Campbell-Tintah School provided student volunteers. A mixture of high school and junior high students were excused from school to help distribute food alongside school staff, administration, and adult volunteers. Student volunteers walked with families while they picked out the food. The volunteer students filled carts for those receiving food and even loaded their vehicles.

Each family chose the items their family could use, and the student volunteers did all the heavy lifting.
Four thousand seven hundred thirteen pounds of leftover food and household items were delivered to the Richland Wilkin Food Pantry for distribution to even more families following the food drop.

For more information about programs of CAPLP, visit our website at **www.caplp.org**



ONE FAMILY'S CART OF FOOD.

Source/Author: Amanda Even, Communications Coordinator, CAPLP

LSNM LEGAL SERVICES OF NORTHWEST MINNESOTA

LSNM is a non-profit law firm established to provide free legal services to low-income people in non-criminal cases across twenty-two counties in northwest Minnesota.

LEGAL SERVICES OF NORTHWEST MINNESOTA OPENS NEW SELF-HELP CLINIC IN OTTER TAIL COUNTY



Legal Services of Northwest Minnesota (LSNM), in partnership with the Otter Tail County Law Library, has opened a new self-help clinic for residents of Otter Tail County.

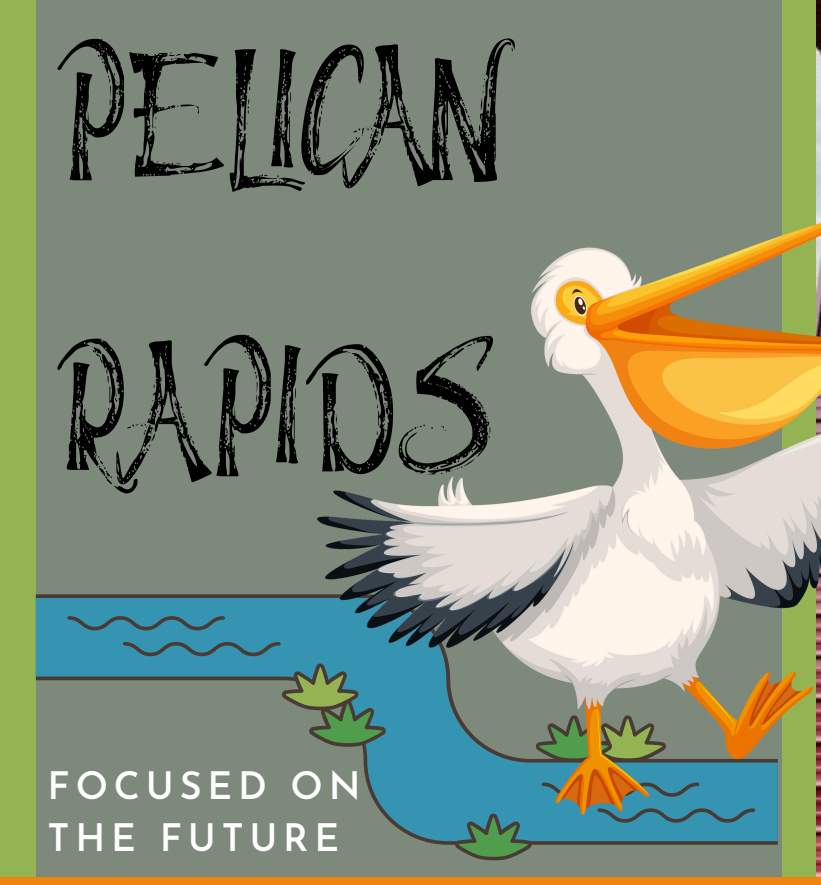
Anne Hoefgen, Executive Director of LSNM stated, "After a two-year hiatus of clinics due to the pandemic, we are excited to get back into the communities we serve. The Otter Tail County Self-Help Clinic provides an opportunity to increase accessibility to the courts, and therefore access to justice. As the community realizes the benefit of this service, I am confident it will become a well-used and valued service."

The district court process is extremely complex. It is a system built by and for attorneys. As a result, navigating the process without an attorney is challenging. Having just a little guidance can help litigants understand how to prepare and file the proper documents, properly serve the opposing parties in the case, and present the relevant information to the court, all of which can the make all the difference in the outcome of a case. When people better understand the process, it aids the efficiency of the court system and strengthens the parties' feeling of fairness in the outcome.

The clinic is held in the Law Library at the Otter Tail County Courthouse, 121 Junius Avenue W, Fergus Falls, MN. An attorney will be available to provide personalized help, free of charge, to any community member with an Otter Tail County Court case on a first-come, first-served basis. The clinic opened May 18, 2022, and is available every Wednesday from 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. LSNM hosts two other self-help clinics. The Becker County Self-Help Clinic, located in the Law Library at the Becker County Courthouse, is open Mondays from 8:00-10:00 a.m. and Thursdays from 2:00-4:00 p.m. The Clay County Self-Help Clinic, located in the Clay County Law Library at the Clay County Courthouse, is open Thursdays from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

If you or someone you know is in need of civil legal help, please reach out to LSNM at 1-800-450-8585, visit www.lsnmlaw.org, or find them on social media. For additional civil legal information visit www.LawHelpMN.org.

Source/Author: Kelly Wencl, Communication & Outreach Coordinator, Legal Services of Northwest Minnesota





"I see a diverse community and a real-world experience in Pelican Rapids."
- Brent E. Frazier, Mayor of Pelican Rapids



The Pelican Rapids Riverfront Restoration Project and the Heart of the Lakes Regional Trail System may well be the momentum Pelican Rapids needs to stimulate its tourism and downtown growth.

With the Heart of the Lakes Trail construction underway on the south end of Pelican Rapids, there will soon be a connection to the recreational trail leading to downtown Pelican Rapids. The new trail segment begins on State Highway 59, behind Lake Region Electric Cooperative. It extends to County Highway 3, leading cyclists, and other recreational users to the west side of Maplewood State Park.

When completed, the Heart of the Lakes Trail will provide a breathtaking pedestrian connection between the cities of Perham and Pelican Rapids, and Maplewood State Park.

Pelican Rapids Mayor, Brent E. Frazier, recently met with Lakes Country Service Cooperative (LCSC) to share the many additional projects they have on the horizon. At the top of Frazier's list is that the City of Pelican Rapids is looking to fill the Economic Development Director position.

The Economic Development Director will work to ensure direction and oversight of the downtown economic development projects while looking to research and create new opportunities for tourism, businesses, and housing.

continued on next page

Source: Otter Tail County - Perham to Pelican Rapids Regional Trail Master Plan, Brent E. Frazier - Pelican Rapids Mayor
Author: Mary Phillipe, LCSC Communications Generalist



Also exciting for Pelican Rapids is the Riverfront Restoration Project. This deconstruction will remove the current dam in the waterway. This river enhancement will open significant growth for tourism and the potential to bring people to the downtown area for recreational activities such as canoeing, kayaking, and fishing.

Other projects include:

·A proposed housing project which could provide many single-family homes.

·Growing the current Farmer's Market in the alley next to Big John's Pelican Pizza.

·A feasibility study for a commercial kitchen to be available for public events and the ongoing city pool project.

The City of Pelican Rapids and local business owners are also preparing for a large downtown road construction project in 2024. This construction will affect highways 59 and 108 within Pelican Rapids city limits. During this road construction, there will be challenges in entering downtown businesses; however, when completed, the enhancements will significantly benefit the downtown merchants.

The new street and sidewalk designs will provide shared paths for pedestrians, bicycles, and narrower driving lanes. This project will also add two roundabouts downtown where there are currently stoplights. The purpose of the redesign is to increase traffic flow in the downtown area.

In preparation for the improvements in Pelican Rapids, and with the hopes of drawing in new residents to the community, housing incentives have been proposed and approved by the City of Pelican Rapids. These incentives include city property available for development at little or no cost, housing tax refunds, utility hookup fees waived, discounted street breakup fees, reduced or free utilities, free family swimming pool memberships, and deferred assessment on utility services.

With the addition of an Economic Development Director, the enhancements to the city, a rich community of cultural diversity, and the newly completed recreational trail connecting to Maplewood State Park and Perham, the community of Pelican Rapids will be in a perfect position for a significant tourism boom.

Mayor Frazier stated, "We are excited about the investments we are making in our community. We have so much to offer those who want to be part of it! When you visit Pelican Rapids, you will feel welcome."

Do you want to learn more about the "real world" experience in Pelican Rapids and the future improvement projects in their community and the surrounding area? Visit their website at pelicanrapids.com, or visit the Otter Tail County website at ottertailcountymn.us.

Pelican Rapids City Hall





West Central Turkeys





Where Alzheimer's Hides

Where does Alzheimer's disease hide? The answer is: often in plain sight. Signs of the disease may first appear small, such as simple memory issues before moving to more apparent changes in behavior or abilities that create challenges in daily life. Alzheimer's is a brain disease that causes a slow decline in memory, thinking and reasoning skills. Memory loss that disrupts daily life may be a symptom of Alzheimer's or other dementia. There are 10 warning signs. If you, or someone you know, notices any of them, schedule an appointment with a doctor.

continued on next page

THE 10 WARNING SIGNS

1. Memory loss that disrupts daily life.
2. Challenges in planning or solving problems.
3. Difficulty completing familiar tasks at home, at work or at leisure.
4. Confusion with time or place.
5. Trouble understanding visual images and spatial relationships.
6. New problems with words in speaking or writing.
7. Misplacing things and losing the ability to retrace steps.
8. Decreased or poor judgment.
9. Withdrawal from work or social activities.
10. Changes in mood and personality.

About Alzheimer's and Where to Find Support

June is Alzheimer's and Brain Awareness Month

Today, more than six million Americans live with Alzheimer's disease, and that number is growing. In Minnesota, it is estimated that there are 99,000 people ages 65 and older living with Alzheimer's, and 171,000 caregivers are supporting them.

To help, the Alzheimer's Association Minnesota-North Dakota offers many no-cost programs to the public that include:

- Online and in-person classes provide information on diagnosis, warning signs, communication, living with Alzheimer's disease, and caregiving.
- A 24/7 Helpline (800.272.3900) is staffed by clinicians and specialists, providing confidential support and information to all those affected in over 200 languages. It is an excellent resource if you have a quick question or need information or support.
- Face-to-face and virtual support groups and education and online resources.

The Alzheimer's Association is the world's leading voluntary health organization in Alzheimer's care, support, and research. Its mission is to eliminate Alzheimer's disease through the advancement of research, provide care and support for individuals and families affected, and reduce the risk of dementia. It's essential for everyone to know that it's possible to live a full and meaningful life after an Alzheimer's or other dementia diagnosis," said Sue Parriott, Alzheimer's Association CEO, Minnesota-North Dakota Chapter. "I see it every day. We have a community of people dealing with the same issues regarding Alzheimer's and dementia, and that can be very comforting. In addition, we offer many free programs and resources."

Easy Ways to Get Involved

- Register as a walker or team captain in the Alzheimer's Association Walk to End Alzheimer's®.
- Volunteer or donate.
- Organize a team for the Alzheimer's Association The Longest Day®, an event to raise funds and awareness for Alzheimer's care, support, and research.

To learn more, visit alz.org/mnnd.org or call the 24/7 Helpline at 800.272.3900.



LCSC EMPLOYEE RETIREMENTS

Brad Schmidt
Health & Safety Facilitator



Allyson Kuehn
Special Education Director



Susan Ward
Academic Challenges Coordinator



Karen Anderson
Art Instructor
Y.E. S. Program



You will be missed as a valued member of our team.
Wishing you all the best in the next phase of your life!

Happy Retirement

CONTACT US
Phone: (218) 739-3273
(800)739-3273 (toll free)
Fax: (218) 739-2459
Email: communicator@lcsc.org
Executive Director: Jeremy Kovash

COMMUNICATOR STAFF
Editors: Jane Eastes: jeastes@lcsc.org
Mary Phillipe: mphillipe@lcsc.org
Address:
Lakes Country Service Cooperative
1001 E. Mount Faith
Fergus Falls, MN 56537
An equal opportunity employer

The LCSC Communicator is a publication of Lakes Country Service Cooperative.

Views and ideas expressed in the LCSC Communicator by its contributors or advertisers do not necessarily reflect views or policies of Lakes Country Service Cooperative and should not be considered an endorsement thereof.

Lakes Country Service Cooperative retains the right to accept, reject or edit any submitted material and requires all submissions to be signed and dated.