

Published by Alexandria Senior Center, a non-profit 501c3 serving older adults since 1984.

414 Hawthorne Street  
Alexandria, MN 56308  
320-762-2087  
www.alexsrctr.org

## VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT



**John Madson, ASC Volunteer**

*By Toni Tebben*

John was born in Alexandria at Douglas County Hospital, living here until the age of six. He grew up in Northfield in a family with four children. After graduation he attended St. Olaf College in Northfield, obtaining a German teaching degree. He taught in Forest Lake and Menahga, before returning to teach at Jefferson High in Alex in 1990, teaching there through 2004. He did translation for attorneys (German, of course) in child custody cases, has worked in Mental Health and has been a job coach for Productive Alternatives for about 10 years. He even lived in Germany for one year. Obviously, he is fluent in German.

His family spent their summers at Darling Dude Ranch, currently known at Arrowwood Resort. He says all of his fond summer memories were from there. He loves to play golf and admits to NEVER getting 'a hole in one.'

John opens the doors of the Alexandria Senior Center for Sunday Music, hosts the event, and closes

**Madson** continued on page 7



ALEXANDRIA  
SENIOR CENTER  
Healthy, Active Living

February 2026  
VOL. 50, NO 02

News

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### February Sunday Music Series

#### Velvet Brass

Sunday, Feb. 1 | 2 – 4 pm

Experience the Big Band sound from our very own local Velvet Brass Band. This band features Swing, Latin, Old-time, Dixieland, Ballads and even a bit of Country. Bring your dance shoes or listen and visit with friends. Snacks and beverages available. Donations appreciated.



#### Donny Brang

Sunday, Feb. 15 | 2 – 4 pm

Donny Brang is a Solo Acoustic Artist from Central MN with decades of live performing experience. His repertoire encompasses a wide variety of music, from yesterday's favorites to songs of today. Enjoyable easy listening and danceable music at its best! Snacks available.



Thank you to our sponsor



## Free Lunch & Free Rainbow Rider Vouchers

Join us for an informative session about our local transportation, Rainbow Rider. Tom Partington, Operations Manager, will be here to provide details and answer your questions.

Thanks to a grant from the Medica Foundation we will be giving out transportation vouchers to use Rainbow Rider to get to the Center!

Date: Wednesday, Feb. 11  
Time: 11:30 am  
Register: Call 762-2087 by Feb. 9



Radio Theatre is back on Friday, Feb. 13... see page 6 for details.

# MESSAGE from SHELLI-KAE, Executive Director



**Our Fall Fund Drive busted our goal of \$25,000 with a total of \$37,000!** A big

Thank You to all that donated. A letter goes to each donor so if you did not get a letter, please let me know.

We have three new board members. I am happy to introduce Erika Johnson (retired OB/GYN), Jeff Morse (retired IT instructor at Alexandria Area Technical College) and Kelsey Meehan (Executive Director/Edgewood). They will be joining a strong and dedicated working board. Our Executive Team includes Kathy Eastlund serving as president; Scott Quitmeyer serving as Vice President; Jan Mahoney

serving as Treasurer and Scott Sonstegard serving as Secretary. Other members are Tina Snell and David Dilly.

Kathleen Linn retired from the board this year after serving for 3 years. Kathleen helped on several committees including Spring Luncheon (continuing to serve on this committee), and host of our New Member meetings and a Holiday Tables host. She started a Bunco league here, too! She was a strong voice on the board that always advocated for you, our members. I am grateful to Kathleen for her time on the board and look forward to her continuing to be a valued member of the Center.

## PIE & COFFEE INFORMATION SERIES

Part 1, 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of each month, Thursday, February 12 at 1 p.m.

### Runestone Museum



Barbara Haacke, Executive Director

The Runestone Museum in Alexandria, MN is home to the most controversial runestone in the world, and certainly one of the most intriguing artifacts in Minnesota. This presentation will offer a glimpse into the historical significance of the runestone, the myths and truths surrounding it, and what we know about the runestone today that we didn't know 25

years ago. Big Ole, the unofficial greeter of Alexandria, has significant ties to the Kensington Runestone. His shield boldly claims that Alexandria is the "Birthplace of America", a claim rooted in the mysterious origins of the runestone. But who built Big Ole and why?

Presenter: Barbara Haacke, Executive Director  
 Date: Feb. 12  
 Time: 1 pm  
 Register: Call 762-2087 by Feb. 11 so we have pie for everyone!

Pie sponsored by: Vivie™

Part 2, 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of each month, Thursday, February 26 at 1 pm

### Dry Eyes

Do your eyes burn, water, feel gritty, or get tired easily? You may be dealing with **Dry Eye**. Join **Dr. Jason Schmit** from **Vance Thompson Vision** as he explains what dry eye is and the options available



Dr. Jason Schmit

to help manage symptoms and improve comfort.

Presenter: Dr. Jason Schmit  
 Date: Feb. 26  
 Time: 1 pm  
 Register: Call 762-2087 by Feb. 25 so we have pie for everyone.

Pie sponsored by: SANFORD HEALTH

## Mindful Dot Art: A Meditative Creative Experience

Slow down, breathe, and enjoy a peaceful creative session designed for all skill levels. Participants will create a dot art canvas while being gently guided through simple mindfulness and relaxation prompts. Soft spa music, calming scents, and a tranquil atmosphere will help encourage focus, presence, and stress relief. No art experience needed—just a willingness to relax and create.



Cami Richter, Moments Hospice

Date: Fridays, March 13, April 10, May 8  
 Time: 10 – 11 am  
 Cost: \$5 per class (includes all supplies)  
 Note: Participation is per class. You do not need to register for all 3.

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# — Health & Wellness —

## Help Manage your Blood Pressure/Hypertension

This 8-week program is designed to improve hypertension self-management through small group educational sessions led by trained Health Coaches. Participants gain knowledge and tools to manage their blood pressure effectively.



### Program Goals:

- Increase knowledge about hypertension self-management
- Boost readiness to make lifestyle changes
- Promote behavior changes in nutrition, physical activity, stress, tobacco use, and medication management

**Date:** Wednesdays, Feb. 18 – Apr. 22  
(No class Mar. 18 or Apr. 1)

**Time:** 10:00 – 11:30 am

**Instructor:** CSB/SJU nursing students trained as Health Coaches via Zoom

**Onsite host:** Jeff Morse

**Cost:** Free

**Register:** Call 762-2087 or stop by the Center by noon, Tues, Feb. 17

**Class limit:** 10 people

Thank you to our wellness sponsor



## MOVE & GROOVE

Join us for a low-impact cardio class set to fun music. This class involves doing various arm and leg movements while standing (like Leslie Sansone's walking workouts).

**Instructor:** Jill Fugleberg  
**Dates:** 2nd & 4th Fridays, Feb. 13 & 27, Mar. 13 & 27  
**Time:** 10:30 – 11:30 am  
**Register:** Call 762-2087  
**Cost:** \$6 for ASC members  
 \$7 for nonmembers

## Healing Gardens

*Growing and Using Medicinal Plants Safely*  
 Discover the soothing power of nature in this hands-on workshop created for those who love gardening and natural wellness. Learn about safe, beginner-friendly medicinal plants that thrive in Minnesota, explore simple growing techniques, and watch demonstrations of gentle, home-inspired uses like teas and salves. Leave with practical knowledge and inspiration to start your own healing garden!



Robin Trott, U of M Extension Educator

**Date:** Friday, Feb. 20  
**Time:** 10 – 11 am  
**Class size:** 20  
**Cost:** \$15 (includes plants to take home)  
**Instructor:** Robin Trott, U of M Extension Educator  
**Register:** Call 762-2087

## CHAIR MASSAGE with Kristina Kramer

A chair massage is a type of massage that is performed while the client is seated in a special chair. The therapist will use a variety of techniques to target the muscles in the neck, back and shoulders. Chair massages are a great way to reduce stress and tension, and it can also help to improve circulation and increase flexibility. Call 762-2087 to schedule a 25-minute chair massage for \$35.



Kristina Kramer, Certified Massage Therapist

**Tues, Feb. 10** 9:00–11:00 am  
**Wed, Feb. 18** 12:30–2:30 pm  
**Wed, Feb. 24** 9:00–11:00 am

## MELT Method ~ NEW!

Join Nancy Hebert to learn about the MELT Method. This simple self-care treatment is focused on noticing tension in your body. We then use easy techniques on soft tissue (fascia) using soft small balls to promote connection, rebalancing, hydration and releasing of the fascia.



Nancy Hebert, MELT Method Instructor

The MELT Method helps with stress, tension, stiffness, and pain in joints. You will go home with a small ball and handouts.

**Dates:** Tuesday, April 7  
**Time:** 10:00 – 11:30 am  
**Instructor:** Nancy Hebert  
**Cost:** \$15 for ASC members  
 \$20 for nonmembers  
**Class size:** 12 minimum; 15 max

## FOOT CLINIC

<b>Wed, Feb. 11</b> 8:30 am–2:30 pm	<b>Fri, Feb. 27</b> 8:30 am–2:30 pm
<b>Fri, Mar. 6</b> 9:30 am–3:30 pm	<b>Wed, Mar. 25</b> 8:30 am–2:30 pm
<b>Wed, Apr. 8</b> 8:30 am–2:30 pm	<b>Fri, Apr. 24</b> 8:30 am–2:30 pm

Call the Center at 762-2087 to schedule your appointment. The fee is \$30, made payable to the nurse. If you must cancel, please let us know.

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# Connecting to Community



Beat the winter blahs with these blah-busting activities! Check them out at <https://alexschools.arux.app> or call 320-762-3310.

## Hot Chocolate & History: "George Washington Swam Naked: Evolutions and Revolutions in Swimwear"

Thursday, Feb. 19, 6:30-7:30 pm, \$14, Legacy of the Lakes Museum  
Come learn about the evolution of swimwear throughout history and see examples from the museum's collection.

## Intro to AED and Hands-Only CPR

Wednesday, Feb 11, 5:30-6:30 pm, \$10, Discovery Middle School  
Have you wondered about those AED's (Automated External Defibrillators)? This class will introduce you to the AED, how they work, how to use them properly, and hands-on practice.

## Writer's Workshop

Thursdays, Apr 9 & 16, 7:00-8:00 pm, \$39, Discovery Middle School  
This two-session writer's workshop, you'll spark your creativity and master the techniques for crafting engaging stories.

## Tax Saving Idea! Qualified Charitable Distribution QCD



- A **QCD** is a donation made directly to a qualified charity, instead of taking the money as a taxable **IRA** distribution and then donating it.
- It's a way to satisfy your **RMD** (Required Minimum Distribution) while also supporting the Alexandria Senior Center (**ASC**)
- The **QCD** must be made by the **IRA trustee** directly to **ASC**.
- **QCD's** are available to taxpayers 70 ½ and older. 2026 maximum amount that can be excluded from income is \$115,000.
- A charitable deduction cannot be claimed for any **QCD** not included in income.

## Rainbow Rider Punch Cards – Available Soon

The Alexandria Senior Center received a grant from the Medica Foundation for Rural Health. With this opportunity we will be able to provide our members with a punch card from Rainbow Rider to get to our Center. Rainbow Rider accommodates wheelchairs and walkers, just let them know ahead of time. To use Rainbow Rider, call **1-800-450-7770** to line up your ride, preferably at least 1 day in advance.



## — Reflections and Thanks —

### Special Note from Becky

Thank you to all those who came to the Viking Plaza Mall and supported our Cornercopia booth last month. We had sales of \$870 over the 5-day period of Wed., Dec. 17- Sun., Dec. 21. This was possible due to all the work from our wonderful group of volunteers. A HUGE thank you to: Cindy Stueve, Dennis Gangl, Pam Hovland, Bonnie Beseke, MaraBeth Englund, Tina Snell, Judy Peterson, Terry Rode, Pauline Semerad, Mary Ellen Olson, Maria Gobernatz, Helen Brunkow, and Angie Sonstegard. In addition to the time they spent at our booth, many made items featured in the sale. Thanks to: Betty Haley, Deb Mohr, Sandy Bessingpas, Carol Strong, Pat Augdahl-Boehmer, Jeanne Back, Marcine Floding, Kay Behrends, Barb Williams, Mary Glade, Kathleen Linn, Mary Nitti, Joan Piotrowski,

Eileen Niemeier, Barb Sather, Vivian Mattson, Pam Durand, Ruth Steffl, Bernice Trousil, and Beverly Williams for their creative talents and donations to this event. We are grateful to you for making this fundraiser possible!



Cornercopia Gift Shop at the Mall. Volunteers Tina Snell & Judy Peterson



Cornercopia Gift Shop at the Mall; Joyce Corle, Pauline Semerad & Mary Olson

## Let's give a BIG WELCOME to our new members!

- Denine Arana
- Sonya Collins
- Terry Cooper
- Nancy Kiger
- Joyce & Robert Naslund
- Alan Roebke
- Lori Schmidt

## Mary Kay Pampering



Janice Jablonski, Mary Kay Consultant

Join us for a Mary Kay Pamper Party. Try what's new + tired + true...for FREE! Janice Jablonski looks forward to helping you look and feel beautiful.

Dates: Wednesday, March 18  
Time: 10:00 am  
Cost: Free  
Register: Call 762-2087  
Class Size: 6

Listen to KXRA for Weather related announcements. If schools are closed due to unsafe weather conditions, ASC is also closed.



## ENCORE! Explorers

Oh, the places we'll go, and the things we may do! Watch for the sign-up for the first ENCORE! Explorers event coming in March. We already have the March and April outings planned. Sign- up begins in March, watch the newsletter.  
~Toni Tebben

## Radio Theatre

**Friday, Feb 13, 11:00am-Noon**  
We are welcoming back the wonderful Radio Theatre troupe for another installment of Ray & Iver and the case of “The Maligned Mailman.” This story revolves around a rural mail carrier and a delicate love letter which has been lost. Join us for this live event and stay for our February Birthday Club celebration at 1:00.



## MEDICARE Workshop

**2nd Wednesday of each month at 3 pm March – September**

Do you have questions about Medicare? Join Corinna Douglas to learn about the basics of Medicare and to discuss your options. She will be at the Center the second Wednesday of every month starting in March and going through September at 3:00 pm.



Corinna Douglas,  
Medicare Advisor  
West Region

## 3rd Annual Waffle Feed

**Saturday, Mar. 21 from 9 am-12 pm**  
Come out and support the Center and enjoy delicious Belgian waffles, special toppings, sausages and beverages.

Presales are \$12 per adult OR \$15 adult at the door.  
Free 7 and under

## BIRTHDAY CLUB

**Friday, Feb. 13 at 1 o'clock**  
**Let's celebrate your birthday!** We invite all members, whether it's your birthday or not, to our February Birthday Party. Join us for live music, cake, ice cream, penny bingo and more. Call by February 12 so we have enough cake for everyone! (Cake sponsored by RehabAuthority + volunteers)



## Angel Fund

Our “Angel Fund” is for anyone that would like to join but may struggle to pay the membership fee. Please contact Shelli-Kae by stopping in her office or dropping a note in the Suggestion Box. We are accepting donations to keep the Angel Fund strong.

## Chair Yoga with Jill

Chair yoga is a great option for older adults because it improves flexibility, balance, relaxation and mental focus. This class includes stretches and yoga poses done while seated or standing. Both can be done with the support of a chair.



Jill Fugleberg,  
Certified Yoga  
Instructor

Jill is a certified yoga, group exercise and active aging instructor.

Dates: Tuesdays, February-March  
Time: 1 – 2 pm  
Register: Call 762-2087  
Cost: \$6 for ASC members  
\$7 for nonmembers

## AARP Driver Safety 4-hour Discount Classes



**Class Time: 8:30 am - 12:30 pm**  
**Sat, Feb 7 Sat, Feb 21**  
**Sat, March 7 Sat, March 14**  
**Sat, March 28 Sat, April 11**

AARP brings you Driver Safety Discount classes at the Center. Participants will reduce their insurance by 10%. Call the Center to sign up at 762-2087. Pay \$25 (AARP members) or \$30 (non-AARP members) at the time of class.

Coffee Station Sponsor for February



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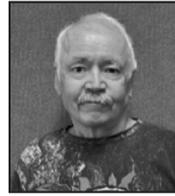
# Monthly Activities

Everyone is welcome to play!

- **Billiards**
  - **Bingo**
  - **Bridge A, B, & C**
  - **Beginner Bridge A**
  - **Men's Bridge** (Closed)
  - **Bunco A** (Closed)
  - **Bunco B**
  - **Craft Club**
  - **Cribbage A & B**
  - **Katy's Swing Band**
  - **Mahjong**
  - **Mexican Train** (dominoes)
  - **Mission Quilters**
  - **North Door Jam**
  - **Pinochle A**
  - **Pinochle B**
  - **Rummikub**
  - **Samba A & B**
  - **Scrabble**
  - **Whist A & C**
  - **Five Crowns, Mondays 10-noon**
- Cribbage: Fridays from 10 am–12 pm and 1–3 pm. All welcome!
  - Looking for scrabble players on Thursday afternoons from 12:30– 3. Join a fun group of men and women and challenge your word skills. Beginners welcome!

# Billiard Lessons with George

Learn the art of how to play pool. Learn how to hold the cue to strategizing your next shot, George will teach you the basics. Want a head start? George recommends watching Rob Byrnes' videos (Vol 1 & Vol 2) to get in the mindset prior to attending.



George Weatherwax, Billiards Instructor

Dates: Fridays, Feb. 6 & 20  
 Time: 3 – 5 pm  
 Instructor: George Weatherwax  
 Cost: Free

# TECH TIME with Luke

## IS IT AI?

With more and more pictures, videos, news stories, and everything else on the internet being made with AI, it's hard to tell what's real and what's not. This month we'll learn how to spot when things online are AI generated.

Date: Thursday, February 19  
 Time: 1 – 2 pm  
 Register: Call 762-2087  
 Instructor: Luke Elliott – Douglas County Outreach Coordinator

# Did you Know?

- Looking for actors for a local production. Small, fun parts. Contact Shelli-Kae by Feb. 13.
- You can park on the east side of Hawthorne on Monday, Tuesday & Thursdays. There are also spots to park on the north side of the building.
- We accept jewelry of all kinds! Bring items to the Center and give them to Becky for Cathy Johnson to sort through. This is a valuable fundraiser for us.
- We have a suggestion box by the kiosk where you check in.
- You can rent the Center for birthday parties, book clubs, etc.

# Volunteer Opportunities

- **Bargain Hunter** – help us find bargains and specials! We will put them in the newsletter for all our members to benefit from.
- Designing posters

# Cash Raffle Fundraiser

\$20 per ticket.

Grand Prize: \$5,000; 2nd prize: \$2,500, 3rd prize: \$1,000, 4th & 5th prizes: \$500, 6-10th prizes: \$100.

Buy tickets at the front desk or from a board member/staff. Drawing will be on Tuesday, May 26, 2026, 5:30 at the Legacy of the Lakes Museum.

# MARK YOUR CALENDAR

- February 1**  
Velvet Brass 2–4 pm
- February 11**  
Free Lunch & Learn w/ Rainbow Rider 11:30 am–1 pm
- February 15**  
Donny Brang 2–4 pm
- February 20**  
Healing Gardens 10–11 am
- March 1**  
New Name Launch
- March 8**  
Mikko & Friends 2–4 pm
- March 21**  
Lions Waffle Feed 9 am–12 pm
- March 29**  
Gary Gylsen 2–4 pm

Madson from page 1

the Center when everyone has gone home. He will also be delivering 'Meals on Wheels' this winter. He enjoys spending time with people at the Center. John, there is still time for that 'hole in one' next summer!

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## *Lorsung Art Studio*

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Mon, Tues, Thurs & Fri 1-4 p.m.

Resident Artist Connie Gawthrop will be “in studio” during listed times. Stop in and see what she is working on.

## **CRAFTER'S CLUB**

2nd & 4th Wednesdays

Time: 9-11:30 am,

Bring any project you are working on and visit with other crafters.

## **- ALEXANDRIA SENIOR CENTER 2026 BOARD & STAFF -**

President - Kathy Eastlund • Vice President - Scott Quitmeyer • Secretary - Scott Sonstegard  
Treasurer - Jan Mahoney • David Dilly • Jeff Morse • Kelsey Meehan • Tina Snell • Erika Johnson  
Executive Director - Shelli-Kae Foster • Program Manager - Becky Christenson

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