

## NOVEMBER IS NATIONAL FAMILY CAREGIVERS MONTH

Here's what we would like to see:

- A big parade featuring caregivers on 5th Avenue in New York
- A huge rally in support of pro-caregiver legislation on the National Mall in Washington DC
- Restaurants across the country offering discounts to family caregivers
- Members of the NFL, NBA, MLB, and NHL wearing colored equipment that draws attention to caregivers

While none of this is likely to happen, we do think that having a month to draw attention to family caregivers is a good thing. It brings the facts about caregiving closer to the forefront of issues to be considered in 21st century America. There have been gains made in the past decade in terms of government support for family caregivers through the creation of programs such as the ones provided by Elderbridge Agency on Aging.

Still, there's a lot more that can and should be done to support family caregivers. Still, in the wake of the debate over healthcare reform, we doubt that policy makers from either party are much interested in wading into similar waters to craft a spending plan to support caregivers.

So that leaves us doing what we do without "official" support other than in the form of having a whole month that honors and celebrates our unpaid work on behalf of family and friends.

A good way to use this month is to consider the way in which you go about your caregiving and find new ways to make it less stressful:

- Join a Elderbridge caregiver support group
- Call Elderbridge for more caregiver information and resources
- Learn to ask for and accept help
- Find ways to care for yourself in order to stay strong to care for your loved one
- Shift your thinking into new patterns of doing family celebrations that make room for the reality of your caregiving.
- Pat yourself on the back—or take yourself out to lunch, a movie, some kind of treat—as a way of saying thanks. You deserve it. Source cited [www.theseniorlist.com](http://www.theseniorlist.com)



## November/December 2021

|                                  |        |
|----------------------------------|--------|
| Dear Marci.....                  | page 2 |
| Board and Advisory Members ..... | page 3 |
| Community Kindness.....          | page 4 |
| Tips for Winter Wellness.....    | page 5 |
| Quinoa Benefits .....            | page 6 |

|                          |         |
|--------------------------|---------|
| Quinoa Salad Recipe..... | page 6  |
| Sneaking Exercise.....   | page 8  |
| Christmas Puzzles.....   | page 9  |
| Menus .....              | page 10 |
| Holiday Hours.....       | page 11 |



*Dear Marci*

I have Original Medicare and a Part D plan. I'm considering changing my Part D plan this Fall Open Enrollment Period. How can I compare Part D plans?

-Tyrone

Dear Tyrone,

I'm glad to hear you're comparing your Medicare coverage options this fall! Research shows that people with Part D could lower their costs by shopping among plans each year. There could be another Part D plan in your area that covers the drugs you take with fewer restrictions or with lower costs, so it's great that you are trying to compare plans.

I would recommend using Plan Finder to compare Part D plans. Medicare Plan Finder is an online tool at [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov) that can be used to compare stand-alone Part D plans or Medicare Advantage Plans. Plan Finder provides information about costs, which drugs are included on the plan's formulary, and the star rating of the plan.

To use Plan Finder, follow these steps:

- Go to [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov) and click on the button that says, "Find plans."
- You can do a general search by clicking the "Continue without logging in" button. If you wish to save your results and information, you can log into or create your Medicare account.
- Next, you can choose whether you are looking for a Medicare Advantage or Part D plan and enter your zip code.
- When you can enter the drugs you take, choose the pharmacies you use, and indicate whether

you are interested in a mail order option.

Plan Finder will display results for plans in your area. Note that a plan may not cover all of the drugs you take, but it may have alternatives on its formulary. Speak to your provider about whether these alternatives would be appropriate for you. Plan Finder also tells you if the plan has a deductible and how much the monthly premium is.

Initially, the plans will be sorted by "lowest drug + premium costs." This is the closest estimate to what you may pay out of pocket for your Part D coverage for the year. You can select "Plan Details" to find out more specifics about coverage, including any coverage restrictions that might apply to your drugs.

Before enrolling, it is a good idea to call the plan directly to confirm any information you read on Plan Finder, as information may not be completely up to date. Here is a list of questions you can ask when calling a company about their prescription drug coverage. You can enroll in a plan online, by calling 1-800-MEDICARE, or by calling the plan directly.

If you are unable to access this information please contact SHIIP (Senior Health Insurance Information Program) at [www.shiip.iowa.gov](http://www.shiip.iowa.gov) or call 800-351-4664 or contact Elderbridge at 800-243-0678 for assistance.

You can make as many changes as you want between October 15 and December 7, but only the last change you make will take effect on January 1. If you choose a plan and realize that it is the wrong plan after Fall Open Enrollment is over, in most cases you will not be able to change your coverage until the next Fall Open Enrollment Period. For this reason, it is important to carefully consider all of your options and take the time to research each plan in order to make a decision that fits your health care needs.

Good luck choosing the best Part D plan for your needs!



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## CommUNITY Kindness Project - Mason City

On October 14th and October 15th, 2021, the CommUNITY Kindness Project took place in Mason City and Clear Lake. With the CommUNITY Kindness Project, Elderbridge teams up with different organizations and businesses to assist our clients in need. Elderbridge chose 10 different clients in need of outdoor chores to be done in preparation for winter. We were fortunate to have donations given to us of bottled water, leaf bags, and the use of rakes. Organizations that contributed to those donations were Culligan Water of Mason City, Grace Church of Mason City, and Tractor Supply of Mason City.

Throughout the two-day event, there were approximately 65 volunteers. Those volunteers consisted of our very own Elderbridge Volunteer, Lynae Heinemann, employees from Battlefield Midwest, students and coaches from the NIACC Softball Team, NIACC Track & Field Team, and NIACC Wrestling Team.

The result of the project ended up with Elderbridge clients having their yards raked, gardens weeded, weeds cut down, laying down mulch, outdoor items put away, etc. We would like to thank every single person who participated in this project, as it was a HUGE success! We could have not done it without all the coordination of the community. A special thank you to Krista Allgor, Volunteer Center & Ticket to Work Coordinator at NIACC who helped coordinate this project!

For better unity, help your community!

Laura Allen, Volunteer Coordinator



*We are thrilled that you were able to be a part of our special day. Your generous gifts and well wishes are much appreciated.*

*Elderbridge Agency on Aging  
Staff and Board*

## TIPS FOR WINTER WELLNESS

There are a number of techniques that can help keep your immunity high and your body in good condition to support wellness all season long so that you can enjoy the chillier months.

### Get Up & Moving

Winter brings fewer hours of sunlight during the day, and per the National Sleep Foundation, darkness naturally causes the brain to release melatonin, a hormone that triggers sleepiness. Exercise can counteract this drowsiness.

### Add Herbal Supplements

Herbal supplements can help support overall health. For example, the supplement turmeric, derived from root extracts of the *Curcuma longa* plant, is widely regarded to have numerous positive health implications.

### Get Ample Rest

The National Sleep Foundation recommends older adults get at least 7-8 hours of sleep each night for optimal health.

### Boost Immunity

During the winter months, when fresh fruit can be harder to find, supplements like Echinacea & Vitamin C can be an alternative source.

### Maintain Skin Health

You can take steps to minimize painful redness and flakiness or cracking by regularly moisturizing your skin with fragrance-free lotions and herbal oils.

*Note: Always consult your healthcare provider when contemplating new ideas to promote better health.*



# Quinoa

Quinoa dates back three to four thousand years ago when the Incas first realized that the seed was fit for human consumption. According to WHFoods quinoa “was the gold of the Incas” because they believed it increased the stamina of their warriors. The Quinoa Corporation calls quinoa the “Super grain of the Future.”

Who would not want to reap the benefits of this amazing super food? Here are seven health benefits of quinoa:

1. Quinoa is one of the most protein-rich foods we can eat. It is a complete protein containing all nine essential amino acids.
2. Quinoa contains almost twice as much fiber as most other grains. Fiber is most widely known to relieve constipation. It also helps to prevent heart disease by reducing high blood pressure and diabetes. Fiber lowers cholesterol and glucose levels, may lower your risk of developing hemorrhoids, and may help you to lose weight (it takes a longer time to chew than does other foods because it makes you feel fuller for longer and is less “energy dense,” which means it has fewer calories for the same volume of food).
3. Quinoa contains Iron. Iron helps keep our red blood cells healthy and is the basis of hemoglobin formation. Iron carries oxygen from one cell to another and supplies oxygen to our muscles to aid in their contraction. Iron also increases brain func-

tion because the brain takes in about 20% of our blood oxygen. There are many benefits of iron; it aids in neurotransmitter synthesis, regulation of body temperature, enzyme activity and energy metabolism.

4. Quinoa contains lysine. Lysine is mainly essential for tissue growth and repair.
5. Quinoa is rich in magnesium. Magnesium helps to relax blood vessels and thereby to alleviate migraines. Magnesium also may reduce Type 2 diabetes by promoting healthy blood sugar control. Other health benefits of magnesium include transmission of nerve impulses, body temperature regulation, detoxification, energy production, and the formation of healthy bones and teeth.
6. Quinoa is high in Riboflavin (B2). B2 improves energy metabolism within brain and muscle cells and is known to help create proper energy production in cells.
7. Quinoa has a high content of manganese. Manganese is an antioxidant, which helps to prevent damage of mitochondria during energy production as well as to protect red blood cells and other cells from injury by free radicals.



## Quinoa Salad with Sweet Potatoes and Apples

This delicious, super-healthy quinoa salad is a great meal-in-one; it makes an ideal vegetarian option at the Thanksgiving table.

### Ingredients

- 1/2 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 1/2 cups quinoa
- Salt
- 1 1/2 pounds sweet potatoes, peeled and cut into 3/4-inch dice
- Freshly ground pepper
- 1/4 cup apple cider vinegar
- 2 large Granny Smith apples, cut into 1/2-inch dice
- 1/2 cup chopped flat-leaf parsley
- 1/2 medium red onion, thinly sliced
- 8 packed cups baby greens, such as arugula or kale (about 6 ounces)

### Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 400°. In a large saucepan, heat 1 tablespoon of the olive oil. Add the quinoa and toast over moderate heat, stirring, for 2 minutes. Add 3 cups of water, season with salt and bring to a boil. Cover and simmer the quinoa for 16 minutes. Remove from the heat and let stand for 10 minutes. Fluff the quinoa, spread it out on a baking sheet and refrigerate until it is chilled, about 20 minutes.
2. Meanwhile, on a baking sheet, toss the sweet potatoes with 1 tablespoon of the olive oil and season with salt and pepper. Roast for about 25 minutes, stirring once, until golden and softened. Let cool.
3. In a large bowl, whisk the remaining 6 tablespoons of olive oil with the vinegar; season with salt and pepper. Add the quinoa, sweet potatoes, apples, parsley, onion and greens and toss well. Serve right away.



# *Happy Thanksgiving*

may your blessings outnumber the autumn leaves.



## HOW TO SNEAK EXERCISE INTO YOUR DAY

Exercise is like a dirty word these days. It intimidates us with visions of perfect bodies sweating in classes, the gods and goddess of fitness shouting what passes for encouragement into their boom mics. The impossibility of finding hours to spend in a gym, and hundreds of dollars going into those membership fees and a workout wardrobe weigh us down, preventing us from getting started. But the fact is, that's not the vision of exercise most health care professionals would want us to conjure. This is because movement (that's right, ANY movement) is in fact considered exercise. It's not "go big or go home" — it's just move throughout your day.

So, with the focus on increasing your movement, how do you build those moments into your day? Follow these tips for easy ways to "sneak" exercise into your day.

Start with small steps. Instead of taking the short cut, go the long way. Park a little bit further away from your office, the grocery store, wherever you go today! Don't wait for the elevator, take the stairs. If you're at home, take an unnecessary detour to the basement or the second level just for fun. Take a walk around the block, or just around your yard if you're short on time.

Get into (house)cleaning. It's true, all of our household chores count as movement. Take your vacuum for a walk around the house, scrub the bathtub, start a load of laundry (in many homes this includes a trip up and down a set of stairs!), make the bed, cook dinner — whatever you do, put a little spring in your step, put on some music and make the most of moving your body.

Power up with a 10-minute workout. Studies now show that a workout of any length not only "counts" as exercise, but that

shorter workouts are just as beneficial as longer ones. So, stop worrying about fitting another 45 minutes into your already over-packed day! Most of us can find 10 minutes at lunch, in the morning before hopping into the shower, or just after work, before starting whatever is next.

Stretch. Daily stretching has all kinds of benefits, from stress relief to better posture. It's a great idea, no matter when you fit it into your day. You can stretch before you get out of bed in the morning or spend a few minutes following a spurt of activity. Maybe the only time you can find in the day is at night. If that's the case, don't stress! Stretching before bed can lead to better sleep!

Yoga. You say you don't have time for an hour-long class? No worries, just 10 minutes of yoga daily can change your life. Or maybe you're thinking that only high impact movement is the only way to get the job done. Not so. Studies have found that even gentle, restorative yoga where poses are held for longer periods of time and are completely supported, can aid in weight loss.

Wherever you are on your movement journey, hopefully these tips have inspired you to make small changes that fit your lifestyle and schedule.







## CHRISTMAS PUZZLES

Just in time for December 25, this fun puzzle challenges you to find the Christmas stocking among the snowmen, gingerbread cookies, presents, and Santa hats. It's not easy, but if you believe in your elf you'll figure it out in snow time.



Can you rearrange the letters below to give the ingredients of the Christmas pudding?

TUGMEN  
ROLUF  
KLIM  
DRABNY  
TEUS  
SGEG

GAURS  
NISSAIR  
TRANSCUR  
LEPE  
EPICS  
SLAMNOD

Answers on page 11

## NOVEMBER 2021 MENU

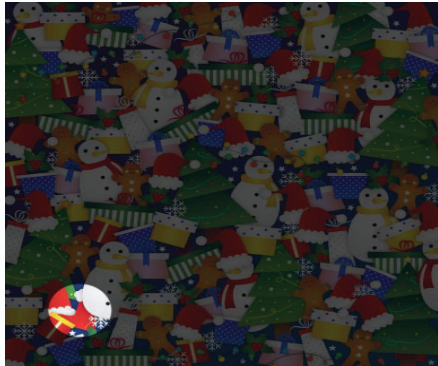
| MONDAY   | TUESDAY  | WEDNESDAY  | THURSDAY   | FRIDAY  |
|--|--|--|--|---|
| <b>1</b>   | <b>2</b>   | <b>3</b>   | <b>4</b>   | <b>5</b>  |
| Herb-Rubbed Roast Beef<br>Mashed Potatoes w/Gravy<br>Asparagus<br>Strawberries | Brown Sugar Glazed Pork<br>Baked Sweet Potatoes<br>Broccoli<br>Banana<br>Molasses Cookie | Chicken & Mushrooms<br>Roasted Red Potatoes<br>Broccoli<br>Apple Slices                    | Chili Mac Casserole<br>Green Beans<br>Peaches<br>Applesauce Jell-O   | <b>COOK'S CHOICE</b>  |
| <b>8</b>   | <b>9</b>   | <b>10</b>  | <b>11</b>  | <b>12</b>   |
| Chicken Alfredo Penne<br>Breadstick<br>Lettuce or Spinach Salad<br>Mixed Fruit | Hearty Chicken Stew<br>Corn Bread<br>Coleslaw<br>Apricots                                | Salisbury Steak<br>Mashed Potatoes w/Gravy<br>Green Beans<br>Banana                        | Salmon Loaf<br>Baked Potato<br>Creamed Peas<br>Mandarin Oranges  | Beef Teriyaki Skillet<br>Steamed Carrots<br>Strawberries<br>Chocolate Chip Cookie |
| <b>15</b>  | <b>16</b>  | <b>17</b>  | <b>18</b>  | <b>19</b>   |
| Ham & Cheese Egg Bake<br>Hash Browns<br>Mixed Fruit<br>Molasses Cookie         | BBQ Pulled Pork Sandwich<br>Potato Salad<br>Mixed Vegetables<br>Strawberries             | <b>COOK'S CHOICE</b>   | Cup of Minestrone Soup<br>Half of a Turkey Sandwich<br>Pears<br>Bread Pudding                                | Meatloaf<br>Mashed Potatoes w/Gravy<br>Corn<br>Peaches<br>Whole Wheat Roll        |
| <b>22</b>  | <b>23</b>  | <b>24</b>  | <b>25</b>  | <b>26</b>   |
| Apple Pork Chops<br>Roasted Sweet Potatoes<br>Green Beans<br>Whole Wheat Roll  | Chicken a la King<br>Biscuit<br>Mixed Vegetables<br>Peaches                              | Roast Turkey<br>Mashed Potatoes w/Gravy<br>Stuffing<br>Steamed Carrots<br>Whole Wheat Roll |  <b>HAPPY thanksgiving</b> | Chili<br>Cinnamon Roll<br>Coleslaw<br>Pumpkin Bar                                 |
| <b>29</b>  | <b>30</b>  |  |  |   |
| Ground Beef Stroganoff<br>Egg Noodles<br>Green Beans<br>Mandarin Oranges       | Crispy Baked Chicken<br>Roasted Red Potatoes<br>Baked Beans<br>Mixed Fruit               |  |                            | <i>Donna Crail, RD, LD</i>  |

## DECEMBER 2021 MENU

| MONDAY  | TUESDAY  | WEDNESDAY  | THURSDAY  | FRIDAY   |
|---|--|--|---|--|
|   |  | <b>1</b>   | <b>2</b>  | <b>3</b>   |
|  | <i>Donna Crail, RD, LD</i>   | Beef Stew<br>Whole Wheat Roll<br>Coleslaw<br>Strawberries                              | BBQ Pulled Pork Sandwich<br>Potato Wedges<br>Mixed Vegetables<br>Banana Cream Pudding | <b>COOK'S CHOICE</b>   |
| <b>6</b>  | <b>7</b>   | <b>8</b>   | <b>9</b>  | <b>10</b>  |
| Chicken & Dumplings<br>Green Beans<br>Apple Slices<br>Chocolate Chip Cookie         | Meatloaf<br>Mashed Potatoes w/Gravy<br>Broccoli<br>Peaches   | BBQ Baked Chicken<br>Potato Wedges<br>Mixed Vegetables<br>Blueberry Crisp              | Half of a Meat Sandwich<br>Cup of Potato Soup<br>Roasted Baby Carrots<br>Mixed Fruit  | Crunchy Pollock or<br>Baked Cod Fillet<br>Baked Potato<br>Coleslaw<br>Whole Wheat Roll |
| <b>13</b>   | <b>14</b>  | <b>15</b>  | <b>16</b>   | <b>17</b>  |
| <b>COOK'S CHOICE</b>  | Roast Turkey<br>Mashed Potatoes w/Gravy<br>Green Beans<br>Whole Wheat Roll                           | Chili<br>Cinnamon Roll<br>Steamed Carrots<br>Pears                                     | Baked Pork Chop & Stuffing<br>Mixed Vegetables<br>Apple Slices<br>Breadstick          | Salisbury Steak<br>Roasted Red Potatoes<br>Corn<br>Mandarin Oranges<br>Molasses Cookie |
| <b>20</b>   | <b>21</b>  | <b>22</b>  | <b>23</b>   | <b>24</b>  |
| Goulash<br>Breadstick<br>Broccoli<br>Peaches  | Scalloped Potatoes w/Ham<br>Broccoli<br>Banana<br>Chocolate Pudding                                  | Cheeseburger on WW Bun<br>Potato Salad<br>Mixed Vegetables<br>Strawberries & Pineapple | Chicken & Mushrooms<br>Roasted Red Potatoes<br>Asparagus<br>Apple Crisp               |   |
| <b>27</b>   | <b>28</b>  | <b>29</b>  | <b>30</b>   | <b>31</b>  |
| Ham Loaf<br>Sweet Potatoes<br>Green Beans<br>Pears                                  | Liver & Onions<br>-OR- Beef Patty<br>Mashed Potatoes w/Gravy<br>Mixed Vegetables<br>Whole Wheat Roll | Hearty Veg Beef Soup<br>Breadstick<br>Mandarin Oranges<br>Ice Box Cookie               | <b>COOK'S CHOICE</b>  | Baked Chicken Parmesan<br>w/Spaghetti<br>Broccoli<br>Peach Crisp                       |

Answers to page 9 puzzles:

**Find the Christmas Stocking;**



**Ingredients for Christmas Pudding;**

Nutmeg, Flour, Milk, Brandy, Suet,  
Eggs, Sugar, Raisins, Currants, Peel,  
Spice, Almonds

**ELDERBRIDGE WILL  
BE CLOSED FOR THE  
HOLIDAYS ON**

**Thursday, November 25**

**Friday, November 26**

**Friday, December 24**

**Monday, December 27**

**Friday December 31**



1190 Briarstone Drive, Suite 3  
Mason City, Iowa 50401

It is Our Mission to Advocate for and  
Empower Older Adults, Caregivers and  
Individuals with Disabilities to Pursue  
Independent Healthy Lives.

Returned Service Requested

The Elderbridge Agency on Aging. . .

Created under the Older Americans Act, Elderbridge has been meeting the needs of Iowans age 60 years and older and their caregivers for more than 40 years.

Elderbridge serves older Iowans in a 29-county area in Northwest and North Central and Central Iowa with the goal of providing the necessary information and resources to empower our constituents to manage their lives and the aging process to the best of their and our abilities.

To learn more about the services Elderbridge provides to older Iowans, contact an Elderbridge office or visit [www.elderbridge.org](http://www.elderbridge.org).

Mason City  
1190 Briarstone Drive  
(641) 424-0678 or 800-243-0678

Fort Dodge  
308 Central Avenue  
(515) 955-5244 or 800-243-0678

Carroll  
603 North West Street  
(712) 792-3512 or 800-243-0678

Spencer  
714 10th Avenue E., Suite 1  
(712) 262-1775 or 800-243-0678

The Bridge Newsletter Order and Change of Address Form  
Mailing information:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Send to:

The Bridge - Elderbridge  
1190 Briarstone Drive, Ste 3  
Mason City IA 50401

☐ Change of Address

The Bridge is available to persons aged 60+ living in our 29-county service area without charge. If you wish to give a voluntary donation to help defray costs, the suggested donation is \$5.