

the FOREVERWELL

A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FOR ALL MEMBERS 55+

ELK RIVER YMCA | DECEMBER 2025

Hello Seniors! Happy December! 'Tis the season for....last minute Medicare changes?! That's a holiday greeting card headline none of us were expecting to receive in our mailboxes this year, and yet...we find ourselves exactly there – and asking exactly that – as we begin this snow-covered month (perhaps with both jaws and mailbox doors still hanging slightly ajar). I would say it's been a shock, but that's probably a sugarcoated cinnamon gum drop of an understatement! Change of any kind is always hard to navigate, especially when that change requires us to think on our feet and adapt quickly. Even so, one thing I know for sure about this bunch (and by "this bunch" I mean all of you reading this lovely newsletter!) is that you are all INCREDIBLY resilient. I have no doubt you will successfully weather this storm no differently than you weathered "Snowmageddon" in 2022, the Halloween Blizzard of '91, or that so-close-it-hurts Vikings season in 1998. You are all so strong, seasoned, and more than equipped for whatever 2026 might throw your way, Medicare or otherwise!

But...that's not all! While you're all resilient in your own right, what I find even more impressive is how you all express that trait in the ways you show up for each other. You keep a standing date to pedal on the exercise machines together bright and early on a Sunday morning. You walk your friends to their car after class and help load their walkers into the trunk. You give high-fives to energetic "littles" on their way to Kids Stuff. Casseroles show up on doorsteps in times of need and Bundt cakes show up in lobbies on birthdays. You come to class early so you have extra time to check in on each other. You take one for the team if someone else needs a certain spot or piece of equipment during class. If a familiar face has been absent from their usual routine a little too long, you start getting worried and I start making phone calls. You donate in time, energy, baked goods, food shelf items, and sometimes even dollars to help make the world around you a little brighter. This list is just the tip of the iceberg! The best part is that you do all of this and more for each other from this little epicenter that is the Elk River YMCA. It's each of you, and all your collective resilience, that ultimately makes the YMCA what strives to be: a place where everyone can grow and thrive.

In fact, I'd go so far as to say that our namesake acronym, stemming from the organizational title of "Young Men's Christian Association," really means this: You. Make. Community. Actualized. Y-M-C-A. Now, if you're the grammar police, you'll have to give me a little grace here! I have but 4 distinct letters to work with and not many perfectly-tensed word choices that start with the letter "A"! Flawless or not, I hope you get the idea. You make community a very real thing inside our walls. You live it by example everyday. You are the YMCA in the flesh! AND...because you're resilient, I know that nothing – not even insurance fluctuations – can put a dent in that. It's because of you that I can look towards 2026 with more hope and excitement than ever. It's because of your resilience that I absolutely know you can, too. Happy Holidays! :)



ELK RIVER YMCA

13337 Business Ctr Dr NW
Elk River, MN 55330
Ph: 763-230-2800

BRANCH HOURS

Mon - Thu 5:00a.m. - 9:00p.m.
Fridays 5:00a.m. - 8:00p.m.
Sat - Sun 7:00a.m. - 6:00p.m.

CONNECT WITH ME

Kristin Lee Geiger
ForeverWell Coordinator
kristin.geiger@ymcanorth.org

FOREVERWELL COMMUNITY GATHERINGS

Expand your horizons and get to know others within our YMCA community through group gatherings. No registration required!

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 10TH

MID-WEEK MORNING MARKET

9:15-11:45AM | YMCA LOBBY

It's NEW! We're bringing the Farmer's Market to you by featuring local artisans and their hand-crafted wares in our lobby. This month, shop salsas and sauces from **Prairie Home Kitchens** and breads from **Winding Way Sourdough**!

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 10TH

COFFEE SOCIAL

9:15-10:45AM | YMCA LOBBY

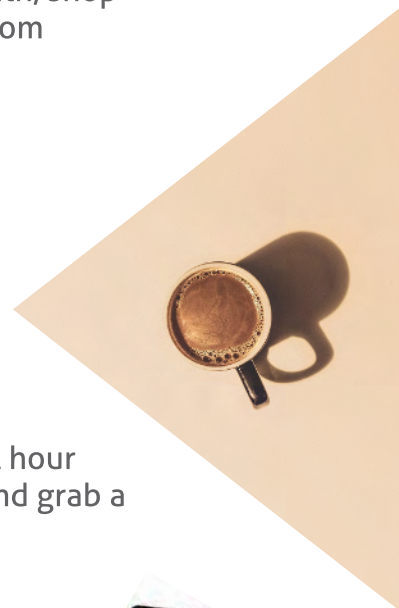
NEW DAY AND STYLE! Join us in the lobby for a rolling social hour where you can chat with friends, enjoy a few sweet treats, and grab a cup of coffee on your way in or out of class.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 16TH

HOLIDAY CHEER: COOKIES & CARD GAMES

11:45AM | COMMUNITY ROOM

It's our **ForeverWell holiday party!** Stick around after class to enjoy a little social time with holiday cookies, bingo, card games, and more. You can even wear your favorite holiday items, if you're feeling festive. If you'd like to bake cookies to share, please sign up at the front desk to help us plan!



DECEMBER EVENTS CALENDAR

DATE	TIME & PLACE	EVENT
Wednesday 12/3	11:00am Hong Kong Buffet	Group Lunch Meet-Up At Hong-Kong Buffet Join fellow members at Hong Kong Buffet in Elk River the first Wednesday of every month. Questions? Ask Jim or Pat at the Y.
Friday 12/5	9:45am Studio B	School Release Day: Class Location Change SilverSneakers Classic will move upstairs to Studio B on this day to accommodate for childcare programming.
Sunday 12/7	All Day	Open Enrollment Deadline - Medicare The deadline for making changes to your Medicare, Advantage, Medigap, and/or drug plans ends on 12/7.
Monday 12/8	9:45am-10:30am Community Room	ForeverWell Cardio Dance Join instructor Lydia S. for our monthly Cardio Dance Class, tailored just for Seniors! It's line dancing meets Zumba meets ForeverWell!
Wednesday 12/10	9:15-11:45am Lobby	Introducing: Mid-Week Morning Market! A morning where we bring Farmer's Market to YOU! Vendors here this month: WindingWay Sourdough & Prairie Home Kitchens. Plus, coffee hour!
Wednesday 12/10	12:00-1:30pm Community Room	Parkinson's Disease Support Group Tips for navigating the holidays, normalizing disease with a little healthy humor, and more!
Monday 12/15	Morning Hours Lobby	Member Appreciation Hot Cocoa Bar Stop by the front desk for a cozy cup of coffee or hot cocoa, plus all the proper fixings in the lobby.
Tuesday 12/16	11:45am Community Room	Holiday Cheer: Cookies & Card Games Join us for some holiday themed fun after class! We'll play bingo, cards, and enjoy some coffee and cookies.
Mon-Tues 12/22-12/23	10:45am Studio A	School Release Day: Class Location Change SilverSneakers & ForeverWell classes will meet in Studio A on these dates.
Thursday 12/25	Holiday Facility Closure	Christmas Day The YMCA will close at 12:00pm on Christmas Eve and remain closed until 5:00am Friday, December 26th.
Mon-Wed 12/29-12/31	10:45am Studio A	School Release Day: Class Location Change SilverSneakers & ForeverWell classes will meet in Studio A on these dates.



Specially Priced **SENIOR MEMBERSHIPS** are coming for 2026!*

*for those impacted by the recent Medicare-related insurance changes. Exclusions and eligibility factors may apply. Please talk to a Member Services team member for additional details. Prices are per month.

\$49*
Single Sr.
PER MONTH

\$79*
Dual Sr.
PER MONTH

MEDICARE **OPEN ENROLLMENT**

Ends December 7th

Learn more about the recent Medicare-related insurance changes and their potential impact on YMCA memberships for those 65+ here



at ymcanorth.org

OUT-AND-ABOUT

EVENTS & OUTREACH IN THE SURROUNDING COMMUNITY THIS MONTH



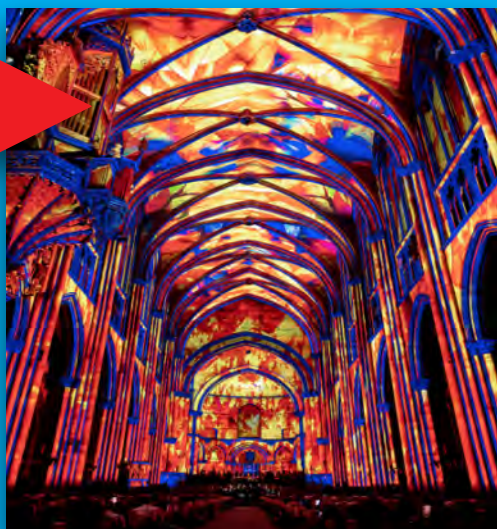
IT'S BACK AT THE YMCA!

INDOOR FARMERS MARKET

December 4th (1st Thursday)

3:00–6:00pm | Elk River YMCA Gym

Shop your favorite vendors at the Elk River Indoor Farmers Market from November to May! Connect with all kinds of vendors from across the region. You'll find everything from small batch kombucha, to goat milk soap, hand-poured candles, baked goods, quality meats, crafts, and more!



LUMINISCENCE MINNEAPOLIS: AN IMMERSIVE CELEBRATION OF LIGHT, SOUND AND STORY

Now – January 2026

Multiple Ticket Options & Showtimes

(discounts available for seniors 65+)

Experience The Basilica of St. Mary (600 Hennepin Ave Minneapolis, MN) in a whole new, festive LIGHT with this immersive art, culture, and music experience.



BECOME A GRANDPAL: BRIDGE GENERATIONS & BUILD MEANINGFUL CONNECTIONS THROUGH LETTER WRITING!

In Partnership with Thryve by Guardian Angels

The GrandPal Program connects older adults with children and families through the simple joy of letter writing. GrandPals share stories, encouragement, and wisdom, while kids experience the excitement of a new connection and letter in the mail! Want to get involved? Visit thryvemn.org to get started!

DECEMBER 2025

CLASS SCHEDULES

Tailored to individuals 55+ and FREE with your YMCA membership!

LAP & LEISURE POOL CLASSES		
DAY	TIME	CLASS
Monday	9:15-10:00am	Aqua Zumba <i>with Kayla</i>
Tuesday	8:00-8:45am	Water Exercise <i>with Renee</i>
	9:00-9:45am*	ForeverWell Water X <i>with Marcy</i>
Wednesday	8:45-9:30am	ForeverWell Water X <i>with Marcy</i>
Thursday	8:00-8:45am	Water Exercise <i>with Renee</i>
	9:00-9:55am*	Water Exercise <i>with Kathi</i>
Friday	8:45-9:45am	Water Exercise <i>with Kathi</i>
Saturday	8:15-9:00am	Water Exercise <i>with Renee & Dana</i>

Advanced registration required for all water classes, up to 96 hours (4 days) in advance. Secure your spot via our NEW YMCA of the North App or by talking to a staff member at the front desk. **Please kindly limit yourself to one water class per day on Tuesdays & Thursdays to make space for more members!** *Location = Leisure Pool

STUDIO CLASSES (COMMUNITY ROOM)		
DAY	TIME	CLASS
Monday	10:45-11:30am	ForeverWell Combo ¹ <i>with Jared</i>
Tuesday	10:45-11:30am	ForeverWell Strength & Stretch <i>with Hannah</i>
Wednesday	10:45-11:30am	SilverSneakers Classic ² <i>with Jared</i>
Thursday	9:45-10:30am	ForeverWell Combo ¹ <i>with Jared</i>
	10:45-11:30am	Chair Yoga <i>with Denise</i>
Friday	9:45-10:30am	SilverSneakers Classic ² <i>with Jared</i>

¹Slightly MORE Strenuous ²Slightly LESS Strenuous

VEGGIE-INFUSED BREAKFAST COOKIES

**'TIS THE SEASON TO...SNEAK
SOME GREENS INTO YOUR
HOLIDAY COOKIE PLATTER!**

Ingredients:

- ½ cup grated zucchini
- ½ cup grated carrot
- 1½ cup uncooked rolled oats
- ½ cup whole wheat flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ½ cup unsweetened applesauce, or very ripe mashed banana
- 1 egg
- 1 tablespoon melted coconut oil or avocado oil
- ¼ cup maple syrup
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- ½ cup blueberries



As adapted from thenaturalnurturer.com

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 350°F and line a large baking sheet with parchment paper or a silicone liner.
2. Place grated zucchini and carrots in the center of a paper towel or a clean tea towel, wrap to cover, and press down to squeeze out excess water. Set aside.
3. In a medium bowl, combine oats, flour, baking powder, cinnamon, and salt until evenly mixed.
4. Stir in applesauce (or banana), egg, oil, maple syrup, and vanilla. Once batter is well mixed, fold in the drained carrots and zucchini. Loosely fold in blueberries.
5. Using a small cookie scoop or a heaping tablespoon, evenly space cookie batter dollops on prepared baking sheet. Batter should yield approximately 16 scoops.
6. Bake for 15-17 minutes or until the outside of the cookies are both dry to the touch and starting to turn golden brown. Let cool for 5 minutes on baking sheet before transferring to a cooling rack.
7. Once completely cooled, store any leftovers in fridge for up to 4 days using an air-tight container.

JUST FOR FUN

HEALTHY ACTIVITIES
FOR BODY & MIND

A NUMBERS GAME: SUDOKU – December Puzzle

Aim for numbers 1–9 in each box, each column, and each row!

Easy

		5	7	4				2
	3			1	2	5		8
	1				8	7	6	4
	6			9	3			
3		2			7		1	
			5					3
8		1	2		6			
	2	6	4					
4	7	3	9	8	1	2	5	

Medium

							3	
			8	1	3	2	4	7
	8	3					1	
8			3	5		4	9	
		1	7		4			3
3					6			
9		7		4	2			
4						9		1
			6		9		2	4

----- Fold Here to Hide / Reveal -----

Easy

6	8	5	7	4	9	1	3	2
7	3	4	6	1	2	5	9	8
2	1	9	3	5	8	7	6	4
5	6	8	1	9	3	4	2	7
3	4	2	8	6	7	9	1	5
1	9	7	5	2	4	6	8	3
8	5	1	2	7	6	3	4	9
9	2	6	4	3	5	8	7	1
4	7	3	9	8	1	2	5	6

Medium

7	1	4	9	2	5	8	3	6
6	9	5	8	1	3	2	4	7
2	8	3	4	6	7	5	1	9
8	7	6	3	5	1	4	9	2
5	2	1	7	9	4	6	8	3
3	4	9	2	8	6	1	7	5
9	6	7	1	4	2	3	5	8
4	3	2	5	7	8	9	6	1
1	5	8	6	3	9	7	2	4

ANSWER KEY

JUST FOR FUN

HEALTHY ACTIVITIES FOR BODY & MIND

A Possible Quote from Shakespeare, if He Were Alive Today:

Customer Service, Where Art Thou

A Short Story by Community Member Mickey Delfino

I got a sweet email Halloween Card from an old friend today. As I read it, I realized it had been a long time since we had been in contact. There was a response area. I noted I would get back to her soon, but then, I decided to give her a little taste about why she hadn't heard from me. The taste became an entire article.

I started with the phone company debacle. You may remember the issue we had trying to disconnect the internet that we thought might still be on our bill or included in the billing for our land line. A simple call turned into a nightmare of the absolute worse customer service I have ever experienced.

First, I placed the call. (big mistake) A voice introduced herself and asked me for information. After giving her the info, she said she would pass me on to someone who could help! Then I spent about 15 minutes waiting for someone to answer. During that time, I refiled all the information from previous billings. Finally, a person answered and asked me for our account number, my address, my phone number. I quickly dug thru the file for my account number again! After I gave all the information correctly, she asked what name the billing was under. I looked and, of course, it was in Lance's name. She must speak to Lance who is in the garage getting the snowblower on the lawnmower. Yikes! He is just putting in a bolt to hold the whole thing in place when I tell him he is needed on the phone. He is very unhappy!

He came stomping in to tell her it is okay to speak to me. She asked him the same questions she asked me. When she got to the account number, I started reading it off so Lance could repeat it. Then she said I needed to be in a different room and not just giving him the account number. Holy Cow! All I want is to know if they are billing me for Internet because their bill does not specifically note what services they are billing.

Okay, she can now speak to me, but I have the wrong department. Oh Fudge! (I use fudge for another word that sometimes slips out.) Back into the queue! While looking around at the bill, I notice the Customer Service Office is in Mississippi. Interesting. Ten minutes later Billy Bob answers sporting a very southern accent, "Wat kin I do fur ya." I answer, "Kin ya tell me whar I kin git a gun and sax bullets? Ha Ha! Just kidding, Billy Bob. I just want to disconnect my internet IF I am being billed for it." Billy Bob utters, "Welp I kin git tha done for ya, wat is you's account number." I smile because his accent reminds me of my youth in downstate Illinois. My particular town had quite a twang that I sometimes slip into, especially if I've had a beer.

I give him the number and he said, "Got her done." I can't believe it! I repeat to him, "You have disconnected my Internet billing?" There is a little pause and then he says, "Yes, Ma'am!" Gosh, I just love Billy Bob and his cute Southern accent. I go about my day, humming, 'Dixie' and smiling to myself. We usually get a bunch of spam calls while I'm cooking. This evening there are no calls. The phone is dead! What?!

The entire account has been disconnected! Won't be able to fix it for 4 days. Four days pass, the land line rings. The repair guy is outside calling and says the line is hooked up. Great! Again, the day progresses, and we receive no calls. I key in our land line number on our mobile and get a message the phone number is not in service. Customer service is closed. Oh Fudge!

Next morning, I call. Same routine as before only this time we don't even have an account! As I am waiting, for someone to tell me what is going on, I look thru a wig catalog as big hunks of my hair are missing from pulling at it each time I am asked for my account number. Oh, she is back on the line and proceeds to call our number which ends in a 1. The landline rings, I answer, she says, "Well it is ringing for me" I ask what number she called. She called our phone number but now ending in a 3! I tell her we have had the number ending in 1 for 33 years. She says, "You just have to accept it. Your old account is gone, your phone number is gone. Your new account is pending, and you cannot access it for at least 24 hours! The Sweet Mississippi accent has been replaced by A Nasty Witch Voice from the lower bowels of Hell. I'll write a letter and mail it to the Mississippi office, where perhaps a relative of Billy Bob's will answer nicely. Hmm.

A few minutes later the land line rings. It is the telephone company trying to sell me the INTERNET to go with our service. Yikes, there goes another hank of white hair flying out of my hand. Where is the wig catalog? Only bright side is we are getting NO SPAM CALLS!!



Parkinson's Support Group **WELLNESS WEDNESDAYS**

Learn more about Parkinson's Disease, ways to cope, and how to manage symptoms as you connect with others impacted by PD. This FREE event is open to the community, caregivers, individuals with Parkinson's, and friends.
Hosted by Brittany Wilson.

Join us Dec. 10th!

12:00–1:30pm in Community Room

Navigating the Holidays with PD

Tips to set you up for success!

Caregivers Holiday Survival Guide

Different type of holiday Hallmark movie!

Humanizing Parkinson's with Humor

PD can put us in distressing situations.
Let's laugh together sharing experiences!

TREATS ARE WELCOMED!

