

Legacy

Investing Today to Impact Tomorrow



Celebrating the Season

As we celebrate this season of giving, please know how deeply your support is appreciated. Together, we are ensuring that the Grand Traverse Pavilions remains a place where people of all backgrounds can age with grace, surrounded by care, respect, and community.

Darrell Lavender, CEO

- ▶ **Support the Mission**
- ▶ **New Leaders**
- ▶ **Summer Events a Success**
- ▶ **Cottages Update**
- ▶ **Aspen Wing Reopens**
- ▶ **2025 Lights of Love**

Legacy Fall/Winter 2025



A Grand Mission



The mission of the Grand Traverse Pavilions is to provide accessible, trusted and compassionate care that enhances quality of life for aging adults. As the region's first and only public nonprofit full-spectrum of care, the Pavilions features:

- Long-term Skilled Nursing Care
- Short-term Rehab
- The Wellness Center: Inpatient and Outpatient Therapy
- The Cottages: Independent and Assisted Living
- Overnight Respite

Among the top employers in Grand Traverse County with over 300 employees, The Pavilions injects more than \$30 million into the local economy making a significant economic impact in our community, while providing \$3.4 million worth of charitable care annually to some of the area's most vulnerable citizens.

With residents, participants, therapy patients, volunteers, and staff, Grand Traverse Pavilions is more than just a nursing home. It's a grand community of caring for generations.



Grand Traverse Pavilions

A COMMUNITY CARING FOR GENERATIONS

GTPavilions.org | 231.932.3000

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Legacy is a publication of the Grand Traverse Pavilions Foundation. If you no longer wish to receive mail from us or to change your contact information please contact Clayton Wagatha at crwagatha@gtpavilions.org or call (231) 932-3019.

We would also love to add you to our email list. Please share your email with us so we can keep you better informed of what's happening here at Grand Traverse Pavilions.



Grand Traverse Pavilions
FOUNDATION

1000 Pavilions Circle
Traverse City, MI 49684
(231) 932-3000

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As we celebrate this season of giving, please
know how deeply your support is appreciated.

Celebrating The Season of Giving



Darrell Lavender, CEO

*Dear Friends of Grand
Traverse Pavilions,*

*As the holiday season
approaches and another year
draws to a close, I want to take
a moment to introduce myself
and share how honored I am to
serve as the new Chief Executive
Officer of Grand Traverse
Pavilions. My name is Darrell*

*Lavender, and after many years in healthcare leadership
across Michigan and beyond, it feels wonderful to be
back in Northern Michigan—a place that has always
felt like home.*

*In the short time I've been here, I've come to see firsthand
the remarkable generosity of our donors and the important
role the Grand Traverse Pavilions Foundation plays in
enriching the lives of our residents and supporting the
mission of our organization. Your contributions have*

*helped make possible so many meaningful projects this
year—from enhancing resident programs and revitalizing
our campus environment to supporting staff education and
advancing quality-of-life initiatives that bring comfort,
dignity, and joy to those we serve.*

*I want to sincerely thank you for your trust in us to use
your gifts wisely and for your continued confidence in our
mission. Every dollar donated strengthens our ability to
provide accessible, trusted, and compassionate care—care
that honors our residents and uplifts our community.*

*As we celebrate this season of giving, please know how
deeply your support is appreciated. Together, we are
ensuring that the Grand Traverse Pavilions remains a
place where people of all backgrounds can age with grace,
surrounded by care, respect, and community.*

*Wishing you and your loved ones a joyful holiday season
and a peaceful New Year,*

*Darrell Lavender
Chief Executive Officer*



Greater Michigan Chapter

We are excited to announce that our Alzheimer's Support Groups, designed for caregivers, individuals living with Alzheimer's, and anyone impacted by the disease, are now back at Grand Traverse Pavilions in partnership with the Alzheimer's Association.

Join us on the second Friday of each month from 1:00 to 2:30 PM for support, resources, and community.

**If you have any questions please
call 231 932 3019.**



Throughout her career, Ann has been dedicated to creating environments where residents feel supported and staff feel encouraged to grow in their work.

Welcome Ann McMann



Ann McMann, Residential Services Director

Grand Traverse Pavilions is pleased to welcome Ann McMann as our new Residential Services Director. She is a healthcare leader with more than 30 years of experience in assisted living, pharmacy, and long-term care. Throughout her career, Ann has been dedicated to creating environments where residents feel supported and staff feel encouraged to grow in their work. Her calm, thoughtful approach and her commitment to quality care make her a wonderful addition to our community.

Ann joins the Pavilions from Boardman Lake Glens in Traverse City, where she has served in several leadership roles since 2014, including her most recent position as Executive Director. Her experience has given her a strong understanding of daily operations, resident needs, and the importance of teamwork in providing dependable care. She is known for being hands-on, approachable, and focused on helping staff succeed so residents can have the best experience possible.

Her training includes being a licensed and certified Assisted Living Home Director, as well as earning a Bachelor of Science degree in Health Management Services from Spring Arbor University. Ann was selected for her new role after a thorough interview process involving both internal and external candidates. A panel of Pavilions leaders recognized her as the right fit for our mission and values.

Ann is someone who values connections, whether it's with residents, families, staff, or the wider community. She believes in open communication, consistent support, and building a strong sense of trust across the campus.

Outside of work, Ann enjoys spending time with her family and appreciating the changing seasons of northern Michigan. Fall, with its crisp air and bright colors, remains her favorite time of year.

We are excited to welcome Ann to Grand Traverse Pavilions and look forward to the experience and heart she brings to our team.

Emerging Leader Award

This past summer, Grand Traverse Pavilions was proud to celebrate Chrissy Wagatha, Assistant Director of Nursing for the Cherry Pavilion, as the recipient of the LeadingAge Emerging Leader Award. This award honors individuals who show exceptional promise in senior services, people who lead with compassion, initiative, and a commitment to improving the lives of others. Chrissy demonstrates all of these qualities every day.

Chrissy joined the Pavilions in 2017 after returning to Traverse City following her bachelor's degree studies in Grand Rapids. She had worked in home care, long term care, sub acute rehab, mental health, and acute care. Through these experiences she discovered her true passion in long term care. When she explored opportunities in the area, the Pavilions stood out for its reputation as a supportive and resident centered community, something she immediately connected with and has helped to strengthen.

Since starting as a CNA, Chrissy's dedication to learning and growth has been evident. She became an LPN in early 2019, completed her RN later that year, and stepped into her first leadership role in 2020 as a Campus Manager. She went on to serve as Assistant Director of Nursing for the Rehab Pavilion and, in 2024, moved into her current leadership role in the Cherry Pavilion. Chrissy's willingness to take on new responsibilities



Chrissy Wagatha, Assistant Director of Nursing, Cherry Pavilion.

ties while nurturing strong relationships with residents and staff has made her an invaluable member of our team.

Her emerging leadership journey included major challenges that highlighted her adaptability and her team focused style. When the sub acute rehab unit reopened after being used for pandemic quarantine, Chrissy helped rebuild the unit from the ground up. She reestablished routines, supported a newly formed staff team, and created a shared vision for resident care. She encouraged open communication, invited staff input, and fostered a sense of ownership that helped the team come together with purpose.

Chrissy also played a key role in supporting the nursing staff through the recent transition to the PointClickCare electronic medical record system. Recognizing the stress that such changes can bring, she provided steady guidance, clear communication, and hands on support throughout the implementation process.

What Chrissy values most about the Pavilions is the strong sense of community. She cherishes the close relationships she builds with residents and families and is inspired every day by the dedication of her coworkers. Some of her favorite moments include watching her young son participate in age exchange activities at the on site childcare center. These are heartwarming reminders of the intergenerational connections that make the Pavilions such a unique place.

Chrissy describes her time at the Pavilions as "transformative," reflecting both personal and professional growth. She looks forward to continuing to develop her mentorship skills, support her team, and champion innovative practices that enhance resident care.

We are proud to recognize Chrissy as the LeadingAge Emerging Leader Award recipient. Congratulations, Chrissy, this honor is truly well deserved.

Planning is already underway for the 2026 Concerts on the Lawn, and we look forward to another season of wonderful music, community connection, and Thursday evenings on the Grand Lawn.

Concerts On the Lawn 2025 Recap

The Grand Traverse Pavilions Foundation's 2025 Concerts on the Lawn free outdoor music series was once again a great success. Over the course of nine weekly concerts, audiences enjoyed outstanding local talent performing on the Grand Lawn under the Hayden Family Gazebo. The annual series has continued to build a loyal following, drawing families, residents, and community members together for an evening of music and connection.

This year, we experimented with an earlier start and end date and chose to skip Fourth of July and Cherry Festival week. While the season featured enthusiastic crowds, a few of the early concerts were smaller than usual due to cooler weather. Based on this experience, we have decided to shift the series slightly later next year, with the first concert of 2026 scheduled for June 18. The coming season will once again feature nine groups, bringing back crowd favorites while also introducing new performances. As always, we welcome suggestions for genres or specific artists. Please reach out to Clayton Wagatha at 231-932-3019

Thank You Sponsors!

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or crwagatha@gtpavilions.org with your ideas.

We are grateful to Serra of Traverse City, which returned as the Title Sponsor in 2025, this year under Serra Volkswagen. Their ongoing support along with our headline sponsors, plays a vital role in making this community tradition possible. Several memorable moments filled the 2025 season. The always popular Petoskey Steel Drum Band once again drew a remarkable crowd, with more than 3,000 guests filling the Grand Lawn to support these talented highschool musicians. Another highlight was The Backroom Gang celebrating an impressive 55 years of performing together.

While the concert series has grown over the years, we often remind visitors that our purpose has never been to become a "concert venue." The heart of the series remains the same, offering an enjoyable evening of music that sparks memories for our residents and invites them to sing, dance, and relive moments that bring them joy. We also take pride in supporting local musicians, several of whom have shared their talents on the Grand Lawn for many seasons. Planning is already underway for the 2026 Concerts on the Lawn, and we look forward to another season of wonderful music, community connection, and Thursday evenings on the Grand Lawn.

We held our second annual golf outing Scramble Fore Seniors this past May at the Crown Golf Club in Traverse City. We had a beautiful sunny day in the mid 70's once again and couldn't have asked for better weather in mid-May. We hosted 17 teams of four golfers for some fun competition and had support from over 40 sponsors and silent auction item donors. We were able to surpass last year's totals by over \$3,000 thanks to more participation and some highly sought after auction items. The Gold Sponsor of the event Forefront Healthcare, who is also our dietary team, supplied lunch for all golfers while winners were announced. Many attendees noted that a standout moment of the day was the meal prepared by Forefront chef

SCRAMBLE FORE SENIORS

Kareem. His short rib tacos, homemade sauces, vegetarian offering, and perfectly paired sides were a hit with golfers and volunteers alike. We are already looking ahead to next spring, with the annual Scramble Fore Seniors fundraiser scheduled for May 15, 2026. All proceeds will continue to benefit the Pavilions' Quality of Life initiatives, directly supporting

meaningful programming and experiences for our residents. Our hope is to fill at least 18 teams, if not more, and make the tournament an anticipated annual tradition in our community. Tell your friends, colleagues and family and we hope you join us next May for another wonderful day on the course, great company, and a chance to support a truly impactful cause.

Cottages Update

In our last issue, we shared an update on The Cottages, our three beautifully restored Victorian-era residences that reflect both the history of the former State Hospital grounds and the heart of our mission. As county-owned buildings operated by Grand Traverse Pavilions, The Cottages represent an important part of the full-spectrum of care we provide to older adults, and we remain committed to preserving their character while ensuring they continue to meet the needs of today's residents.

The Pavilions partnered with the Eckert Wordell Architectural Firm to complete a thorough assessment of Evergreen, Hawthorn, and Willow. That study, finalized at the end of 2024, identified several key areas requiring replacement to maintain the long-term functionality and historic integrity of the buildings. Major recommendations included updates to roofing, boiler and mechanical systems, and other essential infrastructure.

This winter, leadership from the Pavilions and the Pavilions Foundation will meet to review the findings and outline a clear plan for the future. These conversations will help determine the priorities, scope, and timeline for improvements as we balance historic preservation with the comfort and safety of the residents who call The Cottages home.

While we wait for the final plan, the Grand Traverse Pavilions Foundation has already taken a proactive step by applying for a county grant to begin renovating one full floor in either Hawthorn or Evergreen Cottage. This project would serve as an important early milestone and provide a model for future restoration work.

We look forward to sharing more details as this collaborative planning effort moves forward. The Cottages remain an essential piece of our campus and our mission, and we are grateful for the continued support of our residents, families, and community partners as we work together to honor their past and secure their future.



Aspen Wing Reopens

After being vacant since late 2019, we are pleased to share that the newly renovated Aspen Wing officially reopened to residents on October 1. The reopening marks an important step in supporting our mission as the region's trusted, county-owned provider of senior care, and reflects our continued commitment to meeting the long-term needs of older adults throughout Northwestern Michigan.

Aspen was thoughtfully refreshed over the past year to create a comfortable and welcoming environment for those requiring skilled nursing care. The unit now features 23 private rooms, offering residents a sense of privacy and dignity in a modernized setting. As community needs evolve, the number and configuration of rooms may be adjusted in 2026 to ensure we are providing the most responsive care possible.

Prior to reopening, Aspen was showcased during a ribbon-cutting ceremony and a series of open houses in late September. These events allowed community members, healthcare partners, and county leadership to view the updated space and learn more about how Aspen will support residents in the years ahead. The remodel and reopening were made possible through the dedication and support of the Grand Traverse County Department of Health & Human Services Board and the Grand Traverse Pavilions team.

Bringing Aspen back online strengthens our ability to serve the community by expanding access to skilled nursing beds and ensuring residents have safe, comfortable options for long-term care right here on our campus. We are grateful to everyone who contributed to this effort and look forward to welcoming many new residents into the renewed Aspen Wing.

Our very first Aspen resident, Judy, shared with us how happy she is to be on the new floor and how she got here.

Before coming to The Pavilions, Judy was living in a nursing home downstate, but her heart was set on returning home to Traverse City. That journey wasn't easy, but she said hearing that The Pavilions had a place for her was the good news she had been waiting for.

After spending 5–6 months on our Birch wing, she was overjoyed to receive the news that a space was ready for her on Aspen. She shared that one of our dedicated CNAs who has been with us for over 20 years told her about the upcoming opening, and she immediately asked to be placed on the waiting list.

Now that she's all settled into her new space on Aspen she stated, "I love it here. To have my own personal space is wonderful... I'm in a better place now."

We couldn't be happier to welcome her home and celebrate this new chapter together.

Lights of Love

Dear Friends of Grand Traverse Pavilions

When there are challenges and uncertainty in our lives we can often find comfort in family, community, and traditions! We hope the Grand Traverse Pavilions Foundation's Lights of Love celebration will become part of your Holiday gift giving tradition. We invite you to join us in supporting Lights of Love with a gift in honor or remembrance of a parent, spouse, friend or caregiver who has made a lasting impression on your life.

Each gift of \$25 or more will be represented symbolically on the beautifully decorated Holiday Tree in the main lobby of Grand Traverse Pavilions. The tree will be adorned with lights and holiday ornaments, each a symbol of remembrance, love and honor for someone special. These funds will help brighten the Christmas Spirit and fund purchasing new Christmas decorations to replace some of our current ones that are showing their age.

We look forward to the opportunity to provide our residents with a wonderful celebration of community and remembrance during this upcoming holiday season. We hope you will agree... "Giving brings healing and hope... while helping others." Thank you in advance for your thoughtful consideration to support the Pavilions Lights of Love Holiday Celebration.

Lights of Love 2025

Please complete this form and send to:
Grand Traverse Pavilions
1000 Pavilions Circle
Traverse City, MI 49684

Please check desired ornament(s):

- ☐ \$500 - Angel
- ☐ \$250 - Silver Star
- ☐ \$100 - Red Heart
- ☐ \$75 - Gold Star
- ☐ \$50 - Silver Heart
- ☐ \$25 - Lights

Check/Cash: \$ _____
is enclosed.

(Please make checks payable to
Grand Traverse Pavilions Foundation)

Or visit our website to submit request:
<https://www.gtpavilions.org/donate/>

Your Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Please clearly print your commemorative message(s) below:

In Memory of: _____

In Honor of: _____

In Celebration of: _____

Person(s) to be notified of your commemoration gift:

Name: _____

Address: _____

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