



FOR RELEASE

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Grand Traverse Pavilions Celebrates Older American's Month

Traverse City, MI On May 1, 2021 Grand Traverse Pavilions held a special remembrance ceremony to acknowledge the important contributions of aging adults during the first day of May – National Older American's Month.

Recent census information states that "One out of every five Americans, some 72 million people, were 65 years of age or older in 2020. Today this number is now more than 20 percent of the population. The age group of 85 and older is now the fastest growing segment of the U.S. population." (Source: www.census.gov.) "So there is good reason to bring awareness to this segment of the nation's population, and May, as National Older American's Month as set forth by fellow Michigander, President Gerald Ford, in 1976." According to Deborah Allen, Community Engagement Officer for Grand Traverse Pavilions.

It provides an opportunity to reflect on the contributions of older American's and how they have and continue to impact their communities, not just during this one particular month that is set aside to recognize their value, but every day, in communities throughout the country – like here in Grand Traverse County.

The theme for Older American's Month is "Communities of Strength" to reflect how elders enrich the communities that embrace and value their contributions. There are so many wonderful examples of how older American's are-and-have impacted their community.

Within the walls of the Grand Traverse Pavilions, there are WWII Veterans, Executives, Community Leaders, Artists, Musicians, Poets and so much more..... all are valued ELDERS! While we can't celebrate with them today (due to the current visitation restrictions)... this remembrance is indeed a tribute to ensuring their respect!

As demonstrated by the gathering, the group recognize the thoughtful commitment of one such an amazing elder, Clara Belle McManus (and her faithful husband Sen. George McManus) who together made service to others a life's mission." Clara was one of the Charter Trustees of the Grand Traverse Pavilions Foundation in 1997.

Clara and George helped break ground on this facility in 1999, and she made her mark on this organization by championing a campaign to challenge other community leaders to support the very first premise of the Pavilions mission “To **provide accessible**, trusted, and compassionate care to enhance quality of life for aging adults.”

The Clara McManus and Friends Fund was established to support the establishment of an endowment fund to be held at the Grand Traverse Regional Community Foundation entitled the *Benevolent Fund* to ensure financial support for those aging adults in our community that would need assistance for their care. Clara encouraged friends and donors to generously give \$50,000 each to provide the financial support essential to ensure aging adults in our community would continue to have a community based facility, with a charitable mission of providing for their care.

Clara McManus passed away in January 2020, but she will forever be known as a champion for the elderly, for supporting the mission of Grand Traverse Pavilions and for serving as Co-Chair of the Program of All Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE) Campaign to bring a new way of caring for elders to our community. “PACE is an important element in expanding the continuum of care for elders in our region by allowing them to live with independence and grace in their own homes for as long as they are able” shared Allen.

Grand Traverse Pavilions is commitment to its charitable mission and provides more than \$4 Million annually in charity care and unreimbursed medical expenses for the aging adults the Pavilions is entrusted to care for.

Grand Traverse Pavilions Foundation President, Dennis Prout stated, “Today, we celebrate Clara’s memory, and we honor her contributions by establishing this “living memorial” in the Pavilions Plaza, among the trees that were initially planted as part of the original design of the facility. They will continue to bear witness to the Pavilions mission throughout time and for future generation.”

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About Grand Traverse Pavilions

[Grand Traverse Pavilions](http://www.gtpavilions.org) is the region’s first and only nonprofit Continuum of Care. Initiated by Grand Traverse County Department of Health and Human Services in response to the Social Welfare Act 280 of 1939 to care for the state’s most vulnerable citizens. Currently the Pavilions provides services for more than 300 on-site residents and 100 daily program participants. Grand Traverse Pavilions is a community of caring and innovation primarily serving our region’s low-income seniors, with Wellness Center programs for the entire community. Grand Traverse Pavilions has received Nursing Care Center accreditation by the Joint Commission along with Post-Acute Care and Memory Care certifications. A recipient of the Governor’s Quality Care Award, The Pavilions is owned by Grand Traverse County and governed by the Grand Traverse County Department of Health and Human Services Board. Learn more about Grand Traverse Pavilions by visiting www.gtpavilions.org.