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*Program Specialist*

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## A Change ... and A New Chair Looks Forward

You may notice a change in the masthead at left. The Chair of the Koochiching Aging Options Board of Directors is now Jeff Hardwig. He stepped into the position in May, taking up the reigns when outgoing Chair Sarah Monahan announced she and her family are



leaving the community for opportunities in Duluth. New Chair Hardwig extends his thanks to Monahan for her energetic devotion to the organization. He hopes “not to drop the ball” while planning in coming months to emphasize recruiting of new members to the board, cognitive screening, and providing support to new staff.



## Volunteer Spotlight— New Volunteers Teach Tai Ji Quan

Koochiching Aging Options was excited when Ashley Hall and Erin Hall expressed interest in becoming volunteer leaders of a new balance and fall prevention program offered through a state system called Juniper. (See the article on page 3.) They are now offering Tai Ji Quan to area adults who want to improve their chances of NOT falling, gain strength and sharpen cognitive functions.

Ashley and Erin are co-owners of Evolve U Fitness in International Falls. According to Ashley, “We have been interested in TJQ for a few years now and the timing wasn’t ever right for us to get certified. I strongly believe that was because we were meant to pair up with Koochiching Aging Options to bring this to our community! Together we have been able to reach a very large part of our community.

“The training was one of our most challenging due to the mental aspects of the practice – and we’ve done some of the fitness industry’s most physically demanding programs! We went in to the training blind; no clue what we were really in for, but left feeling exhausted, accomplished and excited for what this meant for our community.

“We are only in our third week of the 12-week program, but already our participants are reaping the benefits. This week we had one of our ladies tell us it’s already easier for her to get out of her chair, they are all proud of being able to remember Form One, and they are excited to learn more.”



Ashley, left, and Erin lead the group in Tai Ji Quan

## Keep Your Cognitive Health! - helpful hints

Cognitive health is the ability to clearly think, learn, and remember. There are things you can do linked to cognitive health that can help us function better daily and stay independent longer.

Take care of your physical health. This includes getting recommended health screenings, quitting smoking, and getting enough sleep.

Eat healthy foods. In general, a healthy diet consists of fruits and vegetables; whole grains; lean proteins; and low-fat or non-fat dairy products. You should also limit solid fats, sugar, and salt. Be sure to control portion sizes and drink enough water and other fluids.

Be physically active. Regular exercise, household chores, and other physical activity can help improve your balance, prevent or delay

chronic diseases, and may have benefits for the brain. Aerobic exercise, such as brisk walking, is thought to be particularly beneficial to cognitive health, though research on this is ongoing.

Keep your mind active. Being intellectually engaged may benefit the brain. People who engage in meaningful activities, like volunteering or hobbies, say they feel happier and healthier. Learning new skills may improve your thinking ability, too.

Stay connected. Connecting with other people through social activities and community programs can keep your brain active and help you feel less isolated and more engaged with the world. Participating in social activities may lower the risk for some health problems and improve well-being.

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### Planning for Your Future Care—a presentation topic

In April, Koochiching Aging Options was pleased to host a public presentation by Lynn Betzold, the program coordinator of Honoring Choices Minnesota. Honoring Choices is dedicated to teaching every adult Minnesotan what Advance Care Planning is. "Advance Care Planning (ACP) is a process which helps you think about, talk about, and write down your choices for future health care decisions," according to Honoring Choices. "It's important for every adult to have a Health Care Directive – a written plan for loved ones and health care providers to follow."



Lynn presented to the Koochiching Memory Café and met with a group of area service providers as well as presenting to over 25 people at a public evening session aimed at caregivers. A community-wide effort is being considered to encourage you to plan ahead for times when you cannot make your own health care decisions.

## Tai Ji Quan: Moving for Better Balance

Improved balance and the prevention of falls are front and center in a new program being offered by Koochiching Aging Options.

We are sponsoring Tai Ji Quan: Moving for Better Balance, a twelve-week falls prevention program derived from traditional Tai Chi movements.

The workshop sessions that began June 4 are being taught by volunteer trainers Ashley Hall and Erin Hall at Evolve U Fitness and Wellness.

Estimates are that one in three older adults age 65 and over will fall, and 40% of all hospitalizations are a result of falls. Tai Ji Quan is

proven to reduce risk of falling by 55%. Participants report improved cognitive and physical functional abilities and reduced incidence of falls.



“As group fitness professionals with backgrounds in many different formats,” said Ashley Hall, “we are thoroughly impressed with the layout of each class and the program as a whole. It truly is designed in a way that is easy for the instructors to teach and eases the clients into the program.”



Workshops are offered through

the statewide Juniper™ network—a centralized hub of community providers delivering evidence-based programs to help people manage chronic health conditions, improve balance, prevent falls, and foster well-being.

“It’s also fun.” said Kari Miggins, program specialist at Koochiching Aging Options. She added that Juniper’s programs are proven to make a positive difference in quality of life measures such as feeling more in control, less stressed, and able to do more of what makes people feel well.

Visit [www.yourjuniper.org](http://www.yourjuniper.org) or contact Kari Miggins at Koochiching Aging Options about future sessions.

## May We Recommend Resources — “Our KAO Bookshelves”

In each issue of Kooch Connect we like to focus on resources. To complement our on-line suggestions, we wanted to let you know that we have printed resources on hand as well.

A small library is growing around dementia topics. You

will find – and you may check out – classics like Lisa Genova’s “Still Alice,” “The 36-Hour Day” for caregivers, and “Chicken Soup for the Soul: Living with Alzheimer’s.”

In addition, there are volumes on self-care and caregiving. Check out “Taking Care: Self-

Care for You and Your Family” and National Geographic’s “Your Best Brain Ever.” We also have handy brochures and guides on a range of topics.

Stop by and see us and our library. We can also recommend on-line resources we’ve found most helpful.

... Call us if you need help in searching out these resources.

Groceries to You! / *Memory Café* / Tai Ji Quan **Calendar** 

**July 2018**

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
2	3 T 	4 	5 TJQ 	6
9	10 T 	11  	12 TJQ	13
16	17 T 	18 	19 TJQ	20
23	24 T 	25  	26 TJQ	27

**August 2018**

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
30	31 T 	1	2 TJQ	3
6	7 T 	8  	9 TJQ	10
13	14 T 	15 	16 TJQ	17
20	21 T 	22  	23 TJQ	24
27	28 	29 	30	31

**September 2018**

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
3	4 	5 	6	7
10	11 	12  	13	14
17	18 	19 	20	21
24	25 	26  	27	28

Groceries to You! 218-283-7057

 **Order** on Tuesdays 9 a.m. to Noon  **Delivery** on Wednesdays except July 4



*Koochiching Memory Café* every second and fourth Wednesday

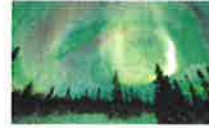
**TJQ/T** = Tai Ji Quan every Tuesday and Thursday 10:30-11:30 a.m.

## Dementia Friends

Koochiching Aging Options visited Nett Lake on the Bois Forte Reservation on June 12 to share a Dementia Friends session. Dementia Friends is a one-hour face-to-face information session that covers five key messages everyone should know about dementia, what it is like to live with dementia and how you can make a difference. Call us if you would like to attend or host a session.



## Good Visit Program



The Koochiching Good Visit Program is seeking both participants and volunteers. Those interested may call Kari Miggins at 238-7057 or stop by to learn more. Participants must be fifty-five and over and be in need of some social support.

- Check-in
- Socialize
- Share Activities
- Help Out
- Make a Difference in Your Life and Your Neighbor's!



## Koochiching Dementia Support Services

- ◆ Helping those with cognitive issues and their care partners through their journey with Alzheimer's and other dementias
  - ◆ Finding resources, referral and education
  - ◆ Addressing medical, legal and social challenges

*Call ...* **Kristy Wagner-Werner,**  
**Dementia Support Specialist**

Phone: 218-283-7030

E-mail: [KoochichingAgingOptions@gmail.com](mailto:KoochichingAgingOptions@gmail.com)

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scription, please let us know at one of the contact points listed on this page. Thank you.

### Making a donation

Thank you for your support of



Please use my gift for:  Memory Café  Groceries to You!  
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*Your generous support helps older adults and families throughout Koochiching County!*

Enclosed is my gift of:  \$150;  \$100;  \$50;  \$25;  Other

*Donations are tax-deductible within IRS regulations.  
Please make checks payable to Koochiching Aging Options.*

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