

# LOCALNEWS

## Borderland grant to advance dementia-friendly work

JOURNAL STAFF REPORT

A grant received by the International Falls area will be used to help make Borderland a more dementia-friendly community.

The grant has been provided through ACT on Alzheimer's, a volunteer-driven, statewide collaboration preparing Minnesota for the personal, social and budgetary impacts of Alzheimer's. Working with communities striving to become dementia-friendly is one of ACT's key strategies.

International Falls is one of 12 new action communities working to prepare Minnesota for the growing number of people with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias. The Alzheimer's Association estimates there are 88,000 Minnesotans age 65 and older with the disease and many

thousands more with other dementias.

"The new communities build on the exciting work being done by seven pilot action communities," said Olivia Mastry, executive lead for ACT on Alzheimer's. "The goal is to provide community support for those with dementia and their caregivers, allowing people to live in their communities for as long as possible."

Grass-root efforts to create dementia-friendly communities now are border-to-border in Minnesota, with leaders and organizations coming together to work in geographical areas and fields of shared interests.

Some areas of focus in the new communities will include inter-generational outreach, engaging new Minnesotans through immigrant populations and furthering the work with

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faith communities.

"We look forward to starting the ACT on Alzheimer's process in the International Falls area," said Myrna Meadows, project leader of the Falls area action team. "Supporting our community members with Alzheimer's and other dementias and their caregivers will do tremendous good for the community as a whole."

The Falls area's application, submitted by Koochiching Aging Options, was part of the initial round of grant requests. Koochiching Aging Options will be

administering the grant and providing technical support, said Douglas Skrief, executive director.

"As the population of Minnesota ages, it's becoming increasingly important to build support systems for people with dementia and Alzheimer's," said Mastry. "Some of the most exciting innovations will emerge from this community work. Creating dementia-friendly communities means that caregivers are supported and people with dementia are able to live in the community and stay out

of institutional care longer. That helps everyone — families and taxpayers who pay for institutional care, employers who have workers trying to balance all the demands of caregiving, and the individuals themselves."

Greater International Falls joins seven pilot communities — Cambridge, Forest Lake, St. Louis Park, St. Paul, Walker, Willmar and the Twin Cities Jewish Community. In addition to the Falls, the new action communities are in Bemidji, Brainerd/Baxter, Detroit Lakes, Edina, Harmony, Marshall, Northfield, Roseville and St. Paul's northeast neighborhoods, in addition to CLUES (reaching Latino populations) and the Minnesota Council of Churches.


The grant is funded through Blue Plus (an HMO affiliate of Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota), the Medica Foundation, and Greater Twin Cities United Way.

More than 60 organizations are partners in ACT on Alzheimer's, which is dedicated to preparing Minnesota for the future and to creating supportive communities for persons and families touched by Alzheimer's disease and dementia. More information is available at [www.actonalz.org](http://www.actonalz.org).

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Boy



Big Sister Anna, along with parents Tyler and Andrea Kostink, would like to announce the birth of William Duane who arrived Saturday April 5th weighing 9"10oz, 22 ¾ inches.

Grandparents are Willi and Kami Kostink of International Falls and Bill and Renee Lieder of Eagan, MN.

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**PARENT QUOTE**

"I sent my son to Falls Elementary because I knew that was the perfect place for him! His teacher is amazing: I never thought my son would be reading by Christmas! I know that his academic future was well started with a trusting and mutually respectful relationship between him and his teacher." Karla Line



Kindergarten teachers will not be available at this time of registration. We will have a "Meet the teacher night" in August after classroom assignments have been made.

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