

Over 80 attendees, vendors and presenters from 13 different counties participated in our 2024 MN TRIAD Conference held on Tuesday, September 17, 2024 at Sourcwell in Staples, MN. By the smiles, laughter and networking that were shared all day long, it was a great success!

Our day started at 8 AM with registration, impromptu guitar music and fun by Tim Eggebraaten and Todd County Chaplain David Greaver and morning treats from Witches Brew – yum! Todd County Sheriff Mike Allen welcomed everyone, Chaplain Greaver offered an opening prayer and our day began. Sheriff Mike and our MN TRIAD President Carlton County Sheriff Kelly Lake shared the emcee role as duty called for Sheriff Mike! Off-Duty Chief Tim Eggebraaten started our day with a great presentation on “I am, I can, I will” about the rhythm of life and what to do when our rhythm is “off.” Tim shared a story about being a Norma/Norman - “I want to remember the people who have helped me!” He left us many points to ponder, including “Life events happen FOR us, not TO us,” “Don't let your attitude be on autopilot,” and the importance of networking – we're not meant to do life alone!” ([www.offdutychief.com](http://www.offdutychief.com))

As always, Jay Haapala from AARP was a wealth of information about scams and how we can protect ourselves. He shared some eye-opening information about AI (Artificial Intelligence) - including an actual demonstration on our cell phones for how scammers can take your picture and transform it into all types of situations (including illegal situations). You can try this for yourself at the website – [www.deepfake.civai.org](http://www.deepfake.civai.org). Jay said using technology is not the problem, it's that technology is also available to scammers. A couple notes of interest: there was a 400% increase in scams between 2019 and 2023 – making COVID one of the largest causes of security risks ever and Medicare out-of-pocket cap will be \$2,000 for 2025. ([www.aarp.org](http://www.aarp.org))

Lasagna, a breadstick and salad were served for lunch by Griff's Pizza out of Long Prairie – awesome food with awesome service! The brownies provided by Farmer's Union (and made by Verna) for dessert were enjoyed by everyone! While enjoying our lunch, Jay Haapala presented Sheriff Mike with the AARP Community Fraud Fighter Award for his prompt assistance in recovering money for a victim of a scam in Todd County. Most fraud victims have no chance of recovering their money once it is sent. That is unless law enforcement can act swiftly and use their authority to stop the transfer, whether at the bank or in this case with the USPS. ***Congratulations, Sheriff Mike...and THANK YOU!!***

Our MN TRIAD Meeting followed – thanks to Itasca, Kandiyohi and Grant (tentative) counties for volunteering to host the next 3 conferences! Sheriff Kelly led the Best Practices session. Thanks to all the counties for providing information ahead of time and for the “extra’ information shared at the conference!

Jode Freyholtz-London from Wellness in the Woods shared her story and information about what Warmline is – a peer support connection that is a safe and free way for individuals to receive confidential and anonymous one-on-one peer support from trained Peers, Certified Peer Support Specialists, and Recovery Coaches. She also talked about how Peer Support is already being used in several Jails and she will be speaking with more counties in the future. (<https://mnwitw.org>)

Steve Hoover from Central MN Council on Aging wrapped up the conference with a lively session on Living with Purpose and how to flourish in the second half of your life! He gave us several “assignments” and “homework” during this session that encouraged us to set an intention each day to make a difference and that opportunities are everywhere! One of the great secrets of life – keep a child-like view of the world. He also shared a 4-step way to apologize/ask for forgiveness that made us think. (<https://cmcoa.org/healthy-aging/>)

While there were many familiar faces at the conference, there were also many who were attending a MN TRIAD Conference for the very first time. It was great to meet these new “family” members and to feel their enthusiasm for the shared goal of keeping our seniors safe! We drew for door prizes throughout the day. So many nice ones and we so appreciate our vendors and TRIAD members for providing these!

We thank everyone who was involved in making this conference a success: Sourcwell for providing a meeting space; our local support from Sheriff Mike and Verna; the door prizes and bag stuffers provided by our vendors and TRIAD members; our MN TRIAD Board for their support; AARP for our yearly conference grant and support; and especially the Blandin Boost Grant for providing a grant that enabled this educational and entertaining training! This conference was an overwhelming success and we thank everyone who was part of it – YOU are the reason it was so great!