

# Minnesota Triad



1<sup>st</sup> Quarter 2026  
Volume 81,  
Issue 1

"Seniors, Law Enforcement  
and Community Groups  
working together for Senior  
Safety....  
*throughout the State!*"

## **MN Triad Board Members**

President: Kelly Lake  
[kelly.lake@carltoncountymn.gov](mailto:kelly.lake@carltoncountymn.gov)

Vice-President: Julie Duehring  
[jatazie@gmail.com](mailto:jatazie@gmail.com)

Secretary: Pauline Fahey  
[pauline.fahey@outlook.com](mailto:pauline.fahey@outlook.com)  
218-536-0899

Treasurer: Mickey Kimmes  
[kimmeshousehold@gmail.com](mailto:kimmeshousehold@gmail.com)

## **Contact Information**

Email:  
[mntriad@outlook.com](mailto:mntriad@outlook.com)

Website:  
[TRIAD\(mnsheriffs.org\)](http://TRIAD(mnsheriffs.org))

Facebook:  
[www.facebook.com/mntriad](http://www.facebook.com/mntriad)



*A great place to  
share senior safety information  
from throughout the state.*



## WELCOME ....

To **YOUR** newsletter!  
Current safety information,  
Information from TRIAD Members  
For TRIAD Members  
and all interested in  
SENIOR safety issues!

*We want to hear from you!*

Please forward any ideas, concerns,  
current fraud schemes, along with  
what you are doing in your Triad programs  
(including pictures) to us so we can  
share throughout the state.

We like to "meet" Triad members  
throughout the state in our Featured  
Members column. We also like to  
share recipes from Triad members  
throughout the state.

Any information you would  
like to share can be sent to  
[mntriad@outlook.com](mailto:mntriad@outlook.com)

## Featured Member

### Deb Friedrichs Kandiyohi County TRIAD

My name is Deb Friedrichs and I joined Kandiyohi County TRIAD in 2018. I have two married sons, two grandsons, and three great-grandchildren all living within two hours. My small rescue dog Norm is my motivation for daily outdoor walks regardless of weather. I grew up in Appleton, MN and have lived in the Spicer area since 1980, enjoying the beautiful lakes, woods and farmland. In addition to family activities, I am involved at Nordland Lutheran Church as a youth leader for our puppet ministry and our Sisters at Heart women's group. I enjoy card-making, creating home decor, reading, and volunteering.

My favorites include: food: homemade chicken and dumpling soup; color: purple; music: classic rock and roll; tv show: American Idol; movie: I Can Only Imagine

I recently retired as Director of the Atwater Area Living at Home Block Nurse Program after 10 years of assisting older people so they can remain in their homes as long as safely possible--which led to my involvement in TRIAD. I have heard many difficult stories of seniors being scammed out of large amounts of money, their fear of living alone, and their feelings of vulnerability as they age. TRIAD offers a strong resource for us older community members, opening communication to discuss concerns with law enforcement and giving a sense of empowerment that comes with knowledge and involvement. I have been excited

to be part of this great organization as a member of the Advisory Board. Before COVID put a pause on activities, our local TRIAD group hosted quarterly educational meetings which included introducing a K-9 team; presentation from the area drug task force; local law enforcement officers provided information on recent scams and fraud. We were busily making plans to host the 2020 Fall TRIAD State Conference which was canceled, so we are very excited to be hosting the 2026 Fall Conference! Our local TRIAD group is working this year to reestablish its presence in the community after the COVID lapse. The first 2025 meeting included a demonstration of the law enforcement robot and drone and was met with awe by those attending. What amazing technology! We also had a tour of the Law Enforcement building, including part of the jail, which attendees found very interesting.

I am looking forward to attending my first State Conferences this year, meeting people and hearing about the many different TRIAD groups and the work that is being done.

## It's All About Safety

### Winter Safety Tips

Winter can be so beautiful, especially if you're watching the snow fall while sitting in a warm home with a cup of hot chocolate! For those other times, like when you need to go outside and/or travel, here are some winter safety tips to keep in mind:

**Dress In Layers:** Wearing multiple layers of clothing helps retain body heat. And remember to add a hat, gloves and scarves to a warm outer coat.

**Stay Indoors When Possible:** Limit activities during extremely cold or windy weather. If you must go outside or travel, keep trips short and let someone know your plans.

**Prevent Falls:** Icy and snowy conditions increase the risk of falls. Keep your walkways clear, use sand or salt for traction (USE A SAND SHAKER!) For better stability, wear non-skid shoes.

**Be Aware of Hypothermia:** Hypothermia can occur when body temperature drops below 95 degrees and seniors may not shiver as a warning sign. Recognize symptoms like confusion, weakness and cold skin. Stay warm and dry, and seek medical attention if symptoms arise.

**Stay Hydrated:** Dehydration can occur any time of year. Drink plenty of fluids, even if you don't feel thirsty.

**Use Space Heaters Safely:** If using space heaters, keep them away from flammable materials and never leave them unattended.

**Smoke Alarms and Carbon Monoxide Detectors:** Make sure all your detectors have good batteries in them and be aware of symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning: headache, weakness, nausea or vomiting, dizziness, confusion, blurred vision and/or loss of consciousness. If you have these symptoms, get into fresh air and get medical care immediately.

**Keep Emergency Supplies:** Maintain a winter emergency kit with essentials like food, water, medications and flashlight in case of power outages.

# Upcoming Conferences And Meetings

**2026  
MN TRIAD  
Spring Meeting  
Kandiyohi County  
Date/Location TBD**

**2026  
MN TRIAD  
Conference  
Kandiyohi County  
September 15-16  
Location TBD**

**2027  
MN TRIAD  
Conference  
Grant County  
Dates/Location TBD**

## Quick Safety Tip ...and the why!

**Always stay aware of your surroundings.**

Being aware of your surroundings is crucial for personal safety, enhancing social interactions and improving overall well-being.

Situational awareness allows you to identify potential threats and avoid dangerous situations.

Social awareness can improve communication and foster better relationships with others.

**Driving Safety:** Winterize your car before the bad weather hits. Avoid driving on icy roads and be especially careful driving on overpasses or bridges. Keep a charged cell phone with you and always let someone know where you're going and when you should be back. Keep an emergency kit with supplies such as a first aid kit, blankets, extra warm clothes, booster cables, windshield scraper, shovel, flashlight, candle and matches, and snack food/drink.

**Check Medications:** Some medications can affect body temperature regulation. Consult with a healthcare provider about any medications that may increase the risk of cold-related health issues.

Remember: Always keep a charged cell phone on you – while in your home, when outside and when traveling! This can be a life-saver if you fall....

## MN TRIAD Meeting

Watch for details of our spring meeting, which will be held in Kandiyohi County. Please let us know of any items you would like added to our agenda for this meeting.

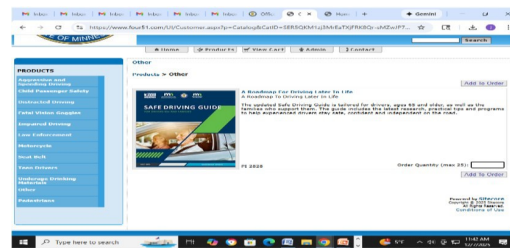
We sincerely appreciate all those who are able to attend these meetings throughout the state. Being able to get together in person helps strengthen the connection between TRIAD programs and members, promotes better communication and exchange of information, and helps keep TRIAD strong and growing.

If you have any questions, items that should be addressed or that you'd like to share with our Triad members throughout the state, please contact our MN Triad Board Members or send an e-mail message to [mntriad@outlook.com](mailto:mntriad@outlook.com).

**All are welcome and encouraged to attend these State Triad meetings.**

## Safe Driving

We know safe driving is a two way street, but each of us need to do our part and while we can't control what other drivers are doing we can be on the alert and be ready to respond. One of the ways you can do this is to read (and share) a free booklet about safe driving and aging. Recently, a small group of people from across the state who meet quarterly to fulfill goals of the Minnesota Strategic Highway Safety Plan related to older driver safety completed the revisions to an awesome booklet that describes actions we can take to be safer on the roads. This booklet is packed with information and can either be read online, downloaded and printed (warning over 30 pages long), or can be ordered from the MN Office of Traffic Safety (OTS). Orders can be for one booklet, or several, and costs nothing. You will need to create an account with OTS, but the site also has many other free educational materials. Here is the link to the website. <https://dps.mn.gov/divisions/ots> click on "order free safe driving....."



The next page shows the variety of materials that are available. The older driver booklet is reached by clicking "other".

A shortcut would be to just copy this link. <https://www.four51.com/UI/Customer.aspx?p=Catalog&CatID=SER5QKM1zj3MrEaTXjFRK8Qr-sMZwJP7iKtvtWiiH-sBYUI7L3t-penQ-e-e&CatInteropID=20F453E3-AE71-4E5F-AB0E-24A91A1A4118&CEI=1ece366f-0f36-4d42-9115-cd84ce9d2d53>

If any of you have attended presentations given by Joan Somes RN, you will recognize some of the information from her presentations. Info includes: how medications can affect driving, how exercise can help driving, and information about the Driver Orientation Screen for Cognitive Impairment (DOSCI). Joan, as well as a pharmacist, occupational therapist, nutritionist, EMS coordinator, the State TZD Program & Operations Director and several others collaborated to update and add to this great resource which actually applies to all age drivers.

Joanie Somes RN  
MN Emergency Nurses Association  
Older Driver Safety Project Grant Manager

## Miscellaneous

**If You Get These Texts,  
Delete Them Immediately**

*Some information taken from Reader's Digest  
www.rd.com*

**Amazon: Your code is 412739.  
If you didn't request this, click  
here <https://amazon.com/73538111>**

**Your Wells Fargo account has been  
locked for suspicious activity. Please call us at  
201-429-3304 to verify your identity.**

**You've missed our delivery.  
To reschedule delivery of your  
parcel, please visit:  
<https://myparcel-ups.com>**

**Congratulations! You've won a  
\$500 gift card to Target. Click  
here to claim your reward:  
<https://targetwinner.com>**

**Minnesota toll services:  
We noticed an outstanding toll  
amount of \$34.50 on your account.**

## Did You Notice?

Did you notice that the dates for the 2026 MN TRIAD Conference have been set?

**Mark your 2026 calendar:**

**Tuesday, September 15<sup>th</sup>  
&  
Wednesday, September 16<sup>th</sup>**

The location and times are still being finalized, but it will be similar in format to the Grand Rapids conference, which had great reviews!!

We are so thankful for our MN TRIAD Hosting Counties and look forward to visiting Kandiyohi County in September!!

**Happy  
New  
Year!**

Please make a payment now to avoid a late fee:  
<https://tolls-minnesota.com>

Good morning. My name is Lee Green from Handy Services. Your qualifications are perfect for our company. Starting pay is \$75/hour and allows you to work from home and set your own hours. Are you interested?

Hello and good morning. Is this Mary?

Is this still your correct contact number?

Hi! Are you available for lunch tomorrow?

All the above are examples of scam text messages. And while they have different forms, they all share some of the same red flags:

- Urgency
- Fear-based
- Impersonating a business you trust
- Too Good to be True
- Trouble with your Account/Delivery
- Free prizes / Winning
- Looking for Personal Information
- Dream way to make money

The ones that have a link to click on may take you to a page that looks like the legitimate page; however, any information you enter (including your email, password, etc) will be going to a scammer. Never click on a link in a text – go the website directly.

The last 3 examples involve strangers trying to strike up a friendly conversation. They will use the wrong name, act as if they've gotten the wrong number and then transition into trying to get you to engage in a conversation. Other times, they act like they know you, preying on your curiosity of who this person is that you can't seem to remember, in order to get you to chat. These conversations start off innocent, but over time, the scammer works to get you to divulge personal information or send them money.

As you may have guessed, this often leads to romance scams. They often start with an "oops, wrong number" text and then take their time telling their sob story, building rapport or building a romantic connection. Later down the line, they'll then ask for money, sensitive personal details or photos to blackmail with.

It's important to be wary of any text that doesn't come from a contact in your phone. Never click on a suspicious text, open any attachments or download any files, which could invest your phone with a virus.

What to do: DELETE and REPORT (often your phone will give you an option to report) or to FTC or FCC. Do not respond to these text messages. Stay vigilant...stay safe!

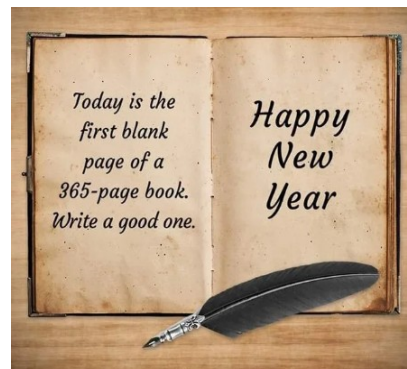
## Recipe

### Cool Whip Frosting (filling)

- 1 3.4-oz. Pkg instant vanilla pudding mix (or desired flavor)
- 1 cup milk
- 1 tsp vanilla
- 1 8-oz tub cool whip, thawed

Mix first 3 items, then mix in cool whip. Cool in refrigerator. When used on cake, keep in refrigerator until ready to serve. Also works with fruit salad.

## A couple reminders as we start the New Year...



WHETHER  
OR **YOU** THINK YOU CAN  
**YOU THINK**  
**YOU CAN'T, YOU ARE**  
**RIGHT**  
- HENRY FORD

## Until next time....

As you know, TRIAD is a state and national program... and many of those programs have a lot of information on their websites about their TRIAD programs.

What a great way to bring new ideas to your program without having to "re-invent the wheel." As we know from the conferences, those involved with TRIAD are always willing to share what they know and learn from others. So if you see something you like on a TRIAD website, give them a call....could be a Win/Win for ALL!