

Building Stability: Munson Healthcare Boosts Safe Harbor Manistee Services and Reinforces Its Regional Commitment to Housing

Manistee, MI — February 25, 2025 — On the first hard freeze of the season, the lights at Safe Harbor Manistee flicker on and volunteers begin setting out bowls of warm dinner. For neighbors who've spent their days bracing against the wind off Lake Michigan, the promise of warmth and a safe bed—just for tonight—can be lifechanging. This winter, that promise extends even further, as Munson Healthcare supports expanded services that help guests take meaningful steps toward long-term stability and independence.

Through its community health investments, Munson is helping Safe Harbor Manistee strengthen basic needs supports and skill building resources—including access to laundry facilities, financial literacy education, life skills coaching, and educational opportunities such as GED preparation. These investments help ensure guests experience not only immediate safety and stability, but also the tools necessary to rebuild their lives.

“Warmth and safety matter—but so do the building blocks of independence,” said Jeff Carter, Director of Safe Harbor Shelter, operated through ECHO is love. “Munson’s support strengthens the resources and guidance we can offer guests as they work toward long-term stability.”

Housing Is Health—and Munson Is Investing Accordingly

The partnership is rooted in Munson’s Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA), which identifies economic security and housing as core drivers of health.

“Housing is health, and stability is built—often one achievable step at a time,” said Kristi Johnson, Chief Nursing Officer for Munson Healthcare’s South Region, including Manistee Hospital. “Access to clean clothing, help with budgeting, or support while pursuing education can remove critical barriers and create pathways forward. We’re honored to invest in these social determinants of health alongside Safe Harbor Manistee.”

Munson Healthcare’s investment in Manistee is part of a larger,

region-wide commitment to supporting housing stability and economic security in Northern Michigan. In the past year, Munson has directed:

- \$150,000 to street medicine programs in Traverse City, Cadillac, Benzonia, and Kalkaska
- \$75,000 to Goodwill Northern Michigan, supporting regional homelessness solutions
- \$10,000 to River House to help survivors of domestic violence build long-term security in Grayling

Together, these investments underscore Munson’s belief that housing and health are deeply connected—and that partnerships strengthen the pathway from crisis to stability.

About ECHO His Love and Safe Harbor

ECHO His Love began in 1992 as Love for Children supporting Manistee County families with young children, expanded to Love INC of Manistee in 2005, and into Benzie County in 2006. Today, ECHO His Love mobilizes area churches to meet physical and spiritual needs—connecting basic needs with resources, teaching life skills through Family Life Centers, providing Safe Harbor winter shelter, and repurposing quality donated goods through the Love INC Store. The shelter is open from November 1 through April 30 with 20 beds providing 2,960 overnight stays each season. This work is carried out by a small staff, more than 300 volunteers, 44 church partners, and numerous community organizations, service clubs, and businesses. Love has no boundaries.

To learn more, visit [Ministry | United States | ECHO His Love](#).



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= MENTAL HEALTH CORNER =

Mentorship and Mental Health: Part 3

In the last two columns, we explored how mentorship supports our mental health and how healthy mentors help regulate our nervous systems, provide perspective and guide our development. But, in reality, mentorship is not just an abstract idea or something that only happens in formal programs or coaching. The truth is that most mentorship actually happens quietly in everyday life through relationships and shared experiences.

When I was 19 years old, I took a job bussing tables at Mr. Bill's Family Restaurant. Little did I know that this was going to forever change the course of my life. It was here that I finally developed a true work ethic and job loyalty. This was in no small part because of the leadership of Bill Winkler.

One day, while I was sitting down for my lunch break, Bill sat down across from me at the booth. He said something to me that day that would change my life forever. He looked me in the eye with a demeanor that would set anyone at ease and said, "Adam, what the hell are you still doing working for me?" What? I loved working for this guy. What in the world could he be talking about?

He then said, "Adam, you're great with people, and you are smart. Why are you at least not in college?" I didn't have an answer for him. If I was being honest, I didn't see myself as college material, so these questions really struck me hard.

Well, within a week, I had applied to college, and the rest, as they say, is history. Without this mentor kicking me in the butt, this might have never happened.

My previous columns shared the mental health benefits of mentorship. In this final column on this important topic, I want to show how sometimes mentors come in the most unexpected forms. Over the years, I have had mentors in coaching, licensing, business and personal development. These were deliberate and intentional, but mentors will also come from some often-unexpected sources.

Now, the question is: Who have the mentors been in your life? If the answer is not obvious, I recommend you get intentional about getting some mentorship.

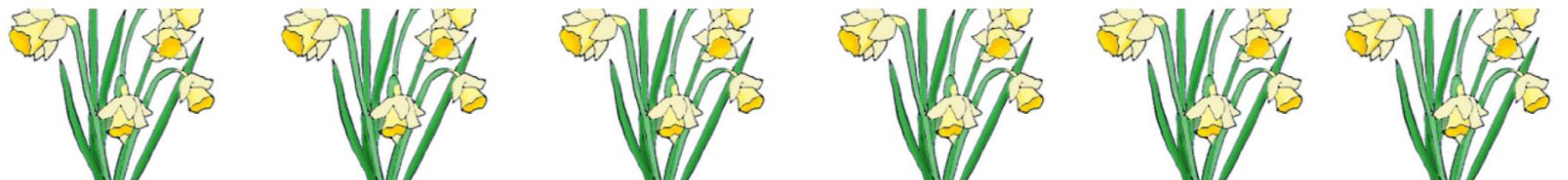
The final question is this: Do you see yourself as a potential mentor? If the answer is even a tepid

"yes", then consider stepping up and sharing your hard-fought life wisdom with another person. I guarantee that this will change both of your lives for the better. This is just another way that we all win at life.

-Adam DeVaney, LCSW, CECP

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Adam DeVaney is a clinical social worker and therapist with over a decade of experience working with clients with a diversity of challenges from addiction and anxiety to overcoming trauma and helping people to learn what it takes to live their best lives. Along with his wife, Mandi, he founded Life's Work Clinic in Kalkaska, Michigan, and Life's Work Coaching with a local and global footprint. Adam has dedicated his life to serving others and walking with them on their healing journeys.



Additional Obituaries on pages 4, 5, 8 & 10

Shirley J. Knust

November 5, 1938 ~ March 14, 2026

Shirley Joyce Knust, 87, passed away on Saturday, March 14, 2026, at the Eden Center in Kalkaska surrounded by her family. Shirley was born on November 5, 1938, to Bernard "Buster" and Marie Cochran. She graduated from Kalkaska High School. Shirley married the love of her life, Eddie Knust, on September 8, 1956. They were married for almost 67 years until Eddie's death on June 26, 2022. They raised two children, Rick and Robin, lived in the same home on Ladd Drive at Torch Lake for 68 years. Shirley loved going fishing with Eddie. She also loved taking care of her grandkids and they often took them fishing with them. But most of all Shirley loved and cherished her family. Shirley is survived by her two children, Rick (Lisa) Knust and Robin (Kim) Wells; 3 grandsons, Mick (Katie)

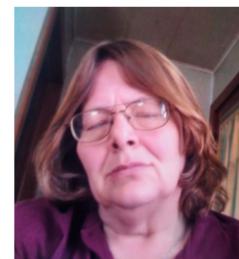


Knust, Matthew (Alyssa) Knust and Brandon Knust; four great grandchildren, Harper Knust, Mason Knust, Hadley Knust and Brayden Knust; her sister Beatrice Cochran, brother Mick Cochran and sister in law, Janice (Knust) Clark; along with several nieces and nephews. Shirley was preceded in death by her parents, Buster and Marie Cochran; her beloved husband, Eddie Knust, sister in law, Reatha Cochran; brother in law and sister in law James and Heather Knust and brother in law, Russell Clark. We want to thank the Awesome staff at the Eden Center for taking such great care of Shirley for the last two years. No services are planned at this time. Arrangements were made by Wolfe-O'Neill Funeral Home, our family serving yours.

Darlene R. Moran

January 20, 1960 ~ February 28, 2026

Darlene Ronda (Maynard) Moran was born in the back of an Army Jeep on a base in the beautiful town of Munich, Germany, on January 20, 1960. She lived out her life in the wholesome town of Mancelona, MI, with her husband Mike and daughter Beth.



Darlene went to be with the Lord on February 28, 2026. Darlene loved to spend time working in her garden and spending as much time as she could outdoors. She enjoyed fishing, kayaking, side by side rides and spending time with close friends and family. Darlene had a very unexpected departure from us here, earth side, but she had the privilege to say her goodbyes and depart surrounded by her family that she loved the most until her very end.

She is survived by her husband Mike Moran of Mancelona, MI, her 3 children, Ronda (Donnie) Spencer, Elizabeth (Titan) Spencer, Nathan Spencer, her step-son Trent (Kari) Moran and her grandchildren Alyssa Smith, and Tristan Hoffman.

Tristan Hoffman.

She was preceded in death by her parents JoAnn Phillips, and James Maynard, and her first love/husband Ward Spencer.

At Darlene's request there will only be a private burial and Celebration of Life. Thank you for all your love and support during this difficult time. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the charity of the donor's choice. Arrangements are in the care of the Mancelona Chapel of Mortensen Funeral Homes.