

# BENZIE

## SENIOR RESOURCES

Be connected. Be supported. Be home.

*Benzie County is a Great Place to Grow Older!*



### 250 Christmas Bags—We could use your help!

Each year, BSR gathers donations of gift items from area churches and individuals, to put together for holiday gift bags that go to our homebound seniors. Many times, these are the only gifts they will receive. Letters requesting basic items have been sent to the churches, and we could use help with the following special items:

- Tins of Coffee or Nuts
- Flashlights with a package of the appropriate batteries
- Suet Cakes for Birds
- Jigsaw Puzzles

#### Did you know?

*Isolation is a silent killer of older adults, affecting over 8 million seniors in the United States. Julianne Holt-Ustad, Ph.D. (psychology professor at Brigham Young University) notes that lack of social interaction is as bad or worse for seniors' health than smoking or obesity.*

### Who are we and what do we do?

Benzie Senior Resources is a 501c3 non-profit organization whose vision is a community where every resident 60+ is valued and supported through all stages of aging. To that end, we:



Assist residents of all income levels in their quest to remain living independently in their own home.



Combat ageism by providing adaptive strategies that keep the world of each senior active, connected, and large.



Offer an array of 25 programs and services designed to keep older adults healthy, connected and learning.



#### Did you know?

*The Gathering Place (TGP) senior center is an integral part of Benzie Senior Resources, providing a welcoming space where all can enjoy connection through shared meals, and engaging activities. Join us at TGP!*



## Clients Share

"I'm so grateful for my delivered meals. All the volunteers are so nice... I like them all. I am a terminal cancer patient, and have been homebound since last November. I suffered through a foreclosure in July. I have daughters here who help me, but the help you give me is a god-send. I enjoy your Facebook page, it helps me know what is going on, and makes me smile. It helps me feel connected. I hope you're able to keep doing what you're doing, the help is so needed in our community." - *Clark*

"I've had a back injury and it's difficult for me to do things like vacuum and mop floors. Lori (home health aid) is wonderful, and we just love her. After Ed's heart surgery, I was caregiver and not able to prepare meals. The Home Delivered Meals arrived hot and were a good fit for us for that short period of time. It's a relief to know you are here when needed." - *Jean and Ed*

"We're returning the transport chair you gave us after my broken ankle. The chair allowed us to have new adventures while healing, and I was even able to go to the Diana Krall concert at Interlochen. Many thanks for making a difficult time easier." - *Pat & Sarah*

"You've been helping me for 7 years. I'm moving to Leland soon to be close to my family. You've helped me ride the Benzie Bus, have dental work, have my income taxes prepared for free, and purchase things I could not afford such as compression socks and an air purifier. When I needed more food, you connected me to BACN. You all mean so much to me... I will miss you and remember you in my prayers." - *LuAnn*

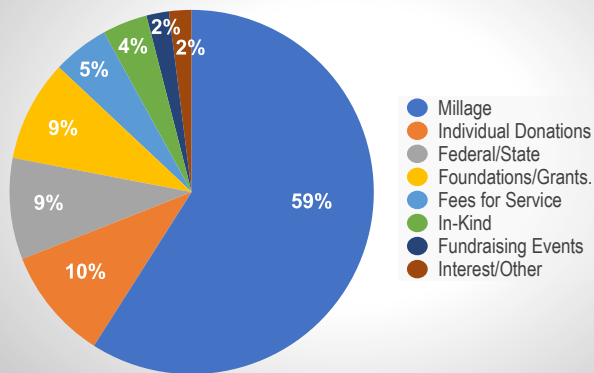
**"What will happen to our Home Delivered Meals if funding is cut to government food programs?"**



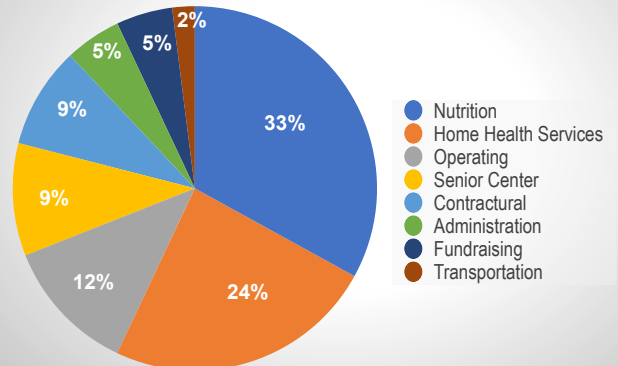
*Because of the generosity of our community through the county millage, the Home Delivered Meals Program (Meals on Wheels) would be prioritized to continue regardless of federal funding cuts.*

## Our 2025 Financial Snapshot

### Revenue - \$2,429,222



### Expenses - \$2,382,393



### Why do we need your help? Did you know that:

- Benzie Senior Resources is the grateful recipient of a county millage, which covers approximately 60% of our expenses.
- Benzie Senior Resources is a registered 501 c 3 non-profit organization which must fundraise to meet the non-millage-covered needs of our growing senior population in Benzie County. Each year this amounts to between \$600,000 and \$700,000.
- The need for senior assistance continues to grow. By 2030, over 40% of Benzie County will be over age 60, and that growth trend shows no signs of slowing.



## Nutrition By The Numbers



With nutritious food being the building block to health (and therefore independence), food security is our priority program! In 2025, we served **70,000 hot and/or frozen meals** to **270 home-bound individuals** throughout the year. We served **21,000 on-site and carry-out meals** to **1,000 people** at The Gathering Place. Attendance at **Produce Bingo** was over **900**, (where each participant left with over 30 pounds of fresh produce and shelf-stable foods). **145 people** participated in **Project Fresh**, receiving nearly **\$4,000** worth of local fresh produce. This is the equivalent of **95,000 meals made available** to **1,500 individuals**. Whatever funding challenges arise, nutrition will always be at the forefront of our service delivery.

## You've requested help...now what?



Home Delivered Meals, Home Healthcare and other home-based services begin with an "Assessment". Registered Nurse Donna shares what happens during an Assessment:

"Once we receive a referral (request for care, which can come from the client themselves, physicians or another interested party), I head out to the client's home. There, I'll learn what I can and use that information

to match available services to the client's needs. After some ice-breaking chit chat I'll ask things such as: Do you have a primary physician? Do you have access to needed medication and can you afford it? Do you know the side effects of your medications? Do you drive? What are your health concerns? Do you need care for incontinence? Can you prepare your own food? Do you need help with bathing? Do you need transportation to doctor appointments, for hair cuts or other things? If appropriate, I'll give some patient education with regard to nutrition. We are there to listen, and any judgments are left at the door. Any one of us could need this help at any time. The whole point of our coming to the home is to learn how we can be of service, and as holistically as possible."

## Snow Days and Home Delivered Meals

What happens when the roads are bad and Home Delivered Meals (HDM) can't run? Here is the behind-the-scenes look at the wrap-around that ensures that our most vulnerable resident still receive food: Staff members divide the routes to make personal phone calls to each client making sure they had enough food in the home. The calls happen for each closing, even if the weather event is 2-3 days in a row. If the client is out of food, staff members go deliver in 4-wheel-drive vehicles. When weather reports show incoming storms, the HDM team packages and delivers additional frozen meals on that day's route to tide people over.



## We Could Use Your Help!

Speaking of Home Delivered Meals... each year a significant portion of our Home Delivered Meals



volunteer drivers head to warmer climates for the winter. This presents a challenge for meal delivery as the winter is also cold and flu season, with more illnesses. If you stay for the winter, would you consider helping us deliver meals? Benzie Senior Resources has their own fleet of delivery cars (most are 4-wheel drive) so there is no wear and tear on volunteer vehicles (or fuel expense). Most delivery shifts are about 4 hours long (including pickup of food and return of the vehicle), and volunteers say how often they would like to work. For more information, please email HDM Manager Jessica at [lindsayj@benzieseniorresources.org](mailto:lindsayj@benzieseniorresources.org).

## Volunteer Corner – Carol Pelky



For the past seven years, if you've come into The Gathering Place, chances are that Carol is also there, helping somewhere. Carol graciously spends her time quietly doing whatever task is needed. When we were able to provide eggs (health regulations no longer allow for that), many of them came directly

from farmers and needed to be washed. Carol and her friend Maren, also a long-time regular volunteer, became the unofficial egg washing team. Carol also helps fold and seal the client newsletters that are mailed each month, and is a member of The Gathering Place Advisory Counsel (group that helps plan and facilitate activities). Of all her duties, Carol lists "wrapping silverware" as her favorite. That's no small task on roast beef day, when she has to wrap well over 100 sets!

*The Gathering Place Advisory Committee could use some additional volunteers. Do you like to decorate, brainstorm, plan and help carry out special activities? You would be a great fit! Applications are available at The Gathering Place front desk.*





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10542 Main Street  
Honor, MI 49640

231-525-0600

231-525-0601

(The Gathering Place senior center)

[BenzieSeniorResources.org](http://BenzieSeniorResources.org)

Follow us on Facebook

Remember us on Giving Tuesday!



### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

*We are grateful for the years of leadership provided by former Board President Nancy Mullen Call, who remains on the Board in ex officio capacity. Nancy was instrumental in leading the organization during a season of exponential growth.*

Rob Manilla | President • Leo Hughes | Vice President • Secretary | Hugh Walton • Treasurer | Victor Dinsmoore  
Rev. Dinah Haag • Ingrid Turner • Paul Turner • Nancy Mullen Call | Ex Officio

*Our thanks also to Rosemary Russell, who retired from the Board in October after many years of service!*

### Snow Removal Program Update

With winter just around the corner we are pleased to share updates about the annual Snow Removal Program. We will no longer be using a voucher system, but rather working with the plowing contractors for direct-billing of clients. This is still a sliding scale fee program. Past participants will receive letters by mid-November explaining the new system and how to sign up. For those interested in participating this year for the first time, please contact Angie at the Human Resources Office, 231-525-0600, ext. 100.



### Equipment Loan Closet

We have several mobility devices available for loan—crutches, walkers, transport chairs, wheelchairs (as available), shower chairs and more. We also have packages of varying sizes of Depends and other incontinence products. If you are a Benzie County resident over 60 recovering from surgery or another medical event, please reach out to see if we have what you need!



### Help us Wrap Up the Season for Benzie Seniors!



We are grateful to once again offer a year-end match opportunity where anonymous donors have joined together to challenge the community to a match. Gifts made now through the end of December will be matched dollar for dollar, to raise an equivalent of \$100,000! These funds have never been more important as we work to address the financial challenges facing our seniors with food insecurity and the inability to cover emergency needs. Gifts may be made on our website, or mailed to the address above. As a non-profit organization, we gratefully accept gifts made through Donor Advised Funds, sale of stocks, and IRA disbursements. Questions? Please contact Kelly at 231-525-0600, ext. 107