

STRAP ON THE BOARDS!

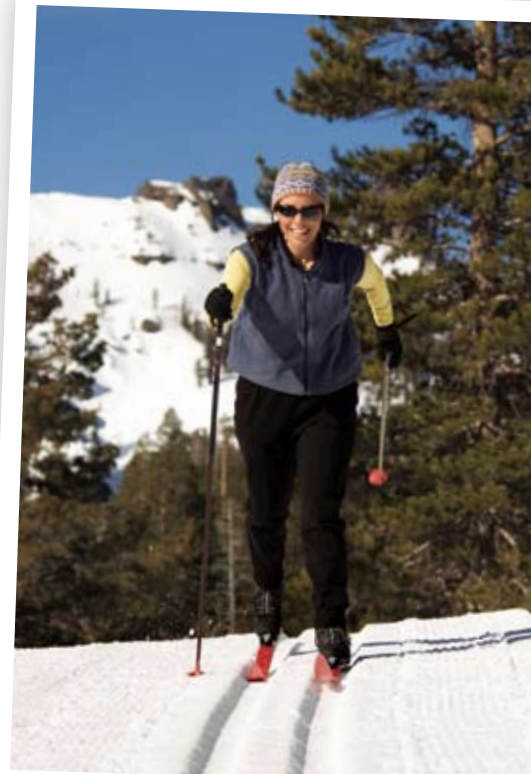
## stay fit in itasca county's winter wonderland

If your idea of getting exercise outside includes athletic shoes, shorts, and a tank top, maybe it's time to try some skis on for size. "If you only go outside when it's warm, you're missing half the year," says William Rutherford, MD, an avid cross-country skier and board-certified family physician at Grand Itasca Clinic & Hospital. "Don't let



William Rutherford, MD  
Board-Certified Family Physician

the thermometer keep you cooped up for months. Find an activity you enjoy and you'll barely notice the cold."



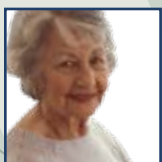
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5 tips on keeping the winter blues away

### Warming Up to Cross-Country Skiing

Dr. Rutherford strapped on his first pair of skis more than 30 years ago and has been quietly swishing through winters ever since. "Cross-country skiing was a relatively new sport in the U.S. until 1976, when Bill Koch became the first American skier to win a medal in the Olympics," Dr. Rutherford explains. "That got people talking about cross-country skiing as a great form of exercise. You can use every major muscle group, raise your heart rate and burn calories. And you stay warm because you're constantly moving."

Today, thousands gather in northern Wisconsin each February for the American Birkebeiner, a 51-kilometer (about 32-mile) cross-country skiing

race from Cable to Hayward.

Dr. Rutherford and fellow Grand Itasca physicians Peter Friedlieb and John Fedje-Johnston skied their 20<sup>th</sup> "Birkie" last February.

"It's grueling, but it's also exhilarating," Dr. Rutherford says. "The first time I skied the Birkie, I had no idea if I could do something like that. The goal is just to finish, and then shoot for your personal best each year."

**Shooting for Your Personal Best**  
Itasca County's 19 groomed trails totaling more than 200 kilometers

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# what's in *your* medicine cabinet?

If you're like many Minnesotans, opening your medicine cabinet can be a bit like opening an overstuffed closet. Out spills pain relievers, cough and cold remedies, half-used tubes of ointments and creams, lotions, 5-year-old eye drops and nasal sprays, and expired prescriptions. You cram everything back in and vow to clean it out "next time."

Sheila Ingram, PharmD., Interim Director of Pharmacy Services at Grand Itasca Clinic & Hospital, says that most people have more than they need in their medicine cabinets. "Like most pharmacists, I don't keep many medications around," she says. Ingram recommends the typical medicine cabinet include a pain reliever like acetaminophen or ibuprofen. "Have it in a children's formulation as well, if you have children," she suggests. "In addition, keep on hand an antibiotic cream for cuts and scrapes and some bandages.

"You don't need much more than that, plus any prescription medications you may be taking," Ingram says. "During cold and flu season, you may want to have some single-symptom cough and cold remedies available. Try not to buy multi-symptom products. If you have a stuffy nose, buy a decongestant. If you have a cough, use something specifically for coughs. It's much safer and more effective to treat only the symptoms you actually have."

## Safe Handling of Meds

Ingram suggests the following for safe storage, management, and disposal of your over-the-counter and prescription drugs.



Sheila Ingram, PharmD.,  
Interim Director of  
Pharmacy Services

- Store your medications – except those that need refrigeration – in a cool, dry place safe from children and pets. "Don't keep meds in the bathroom," she warns. "The heat and humidity can degrade capsules and possibly lower the effectiveness of certain drugs."
- Keep medications in their original, properly labeled containers.
- Be sure to use all prescription medications as directed. Finish any prescribed antibiotics, even if you are feeling better.
- Do not use anyone else's prescription drugs.
- Safely dispose of any drugs you are no longer taking, those for which the dosage has changed, and anything more than a year old. See the accompanying article for the best way to dispose of old drugs.

## Avoid Drug Interactions

Some of the most common drug interactions occur with blood pressure medications, blood thinners, and cholesterol-lowering drugs. Ingram stresses the importance of talking with your doctor or pharmacist before taking any over-the-counter medications, vitamins, or supplements if you are on any prescription drugs. "Be especially careful of cough and cold preparations

## Help Protect Our Water Supply Dispose of Drugs Safely

"We no longer recommend flushing medications down the toilet or drain, because they get into the water supply," says Sheila Ingram, PharmD., Interim Director of Pharmacy Services at Grand Itasca Clinic & Hospital. Here is the safe way to dispose of medications and protect our natural resources:

1. Put the unused pills or capsules in an empty bottle with a cap, such as a pop or water bottle.
2. Fill the bottle halfway with water and let the pills dissolve.
3. Fill the bottle the rest of the way with cat litter, sand, or dirt. Cap the bottle and throw it in the regular trash.

To dispose of a liquid medication, leave it in the bottle it came in and follow step 3 above.

and diet drugs," she says. "Herbal supplements like echinacea, saw palmetto, ginkgo biloba, and St. John's Wort can cause significant problems. Even herbal and green teas can have an impact, so always check with your doctor or pharmacist."

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GIVE IT A SHOT!

# plan *not* to get the flu this year

**N**ausea, vomiting and diarrhea. Sounds like the flu, right? “That’s actually more like gastroenteritis,” says Marsha Wolske, RN, Infection Preventionist at Grand Itasca Clinic & Hospital. “Some people call it the ‘stomach flu,’ but that’s not the same influenza we get vaccinated against every year.”

## What Is Influenza?

Influenza, or the flu, is an acute, contagious respiratory infection that might feel similar to the common cold. But flu symptoms – sudden fever, chills, headache, body aches and dry cough – are more intense, and the flu can develop into a life-threatening illness for some individuals.

“The flu is easily spread and can seriously affect breathing for weeks,” Wolske says. “People die every year from respiratory influenza.”

## Fend off Flu

Last year, about 36,000 people died from the flu and 200,000 were hospitalized with flu complications in the U.S.\* You can help try to lower this season’s flu casualties – and prevent being one – by getting an influenza vaccine shot or nasal spray.\*\*

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends the vaccine for anyone who wants to reduce his or her chances of getting the flu, but especially children (6 months and older), pregnant women, those 50 years and older, and health care workers who care for sick people.



“A flu shot cannot make anyone get the flu – it’s a killed virus that cannot multiply,” Wolske adds. “The vaccine works by tricking your body into making the antibodies you’ll need to fight off a live virus when you’re exposed.”

Medicare covers the cost of the flu vaccine. If your insurance does not, Itasca County has many flu clinics where you can get a vaccine for a reasonable fee. For more information, please call 218/326-5000.

## Stop the Spread

If you haven’t been vaccinated, you can be contagious with the flu for 24 hours before you have symptoms. “Unvaccinated people continue to go to work and/or school and unknowingly spread the virus,” Wolske says.

When infected people sneeze or cough, they shed the virus from their nose and mouth into droplets that land on everything within about 3 feet, often including their hands. Then they touch door knobs, shopping carts and telephones and leave the virus for others to pick up. “You may have a strong

immune system, but not everyone is as well as you,” Wolske says.

## Simple Steps to Stay Healthy

Wolske recommends three simple steps that you can take to help keep everyone in our area communities healthy this flu season:

- All children (6 months to 18 years) and adults should **get vaccinated**.\*\*\*
- **Wash hands** with soap and water or hand sanitizer frequently.
- **Cover your mouth and nose** with a tissue or your inner elbow if you cough or sneeze.



Marsha Wolske, RN,  
Infection Preventionist

\* Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Key Facts About Seasonal Influenza.

\*\* Nasal spray flu vaccine is an option for nonpregnant, healthy people 2 – 49 years of age. One exception is healthy people who care for those with weakened immune systems.

\*\*\* Consult a physician before getting a shot if you are allergic to chicken eggs or have had a severe reaction to a flu shot in the past.

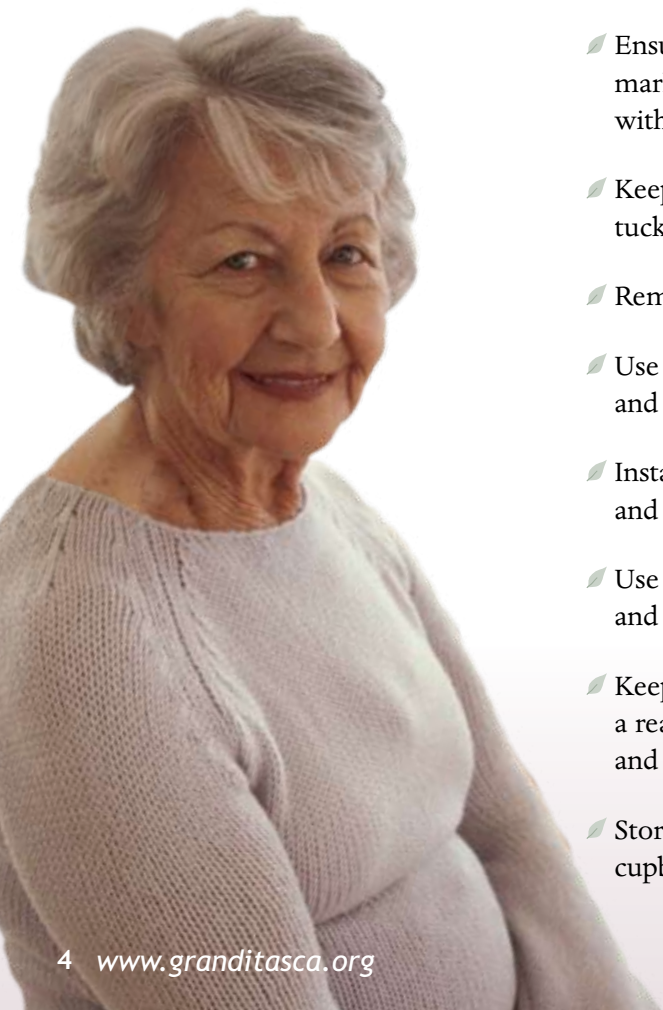
# stay safe inside and out

One fall can change everything for an older person – mobility, independence, and an individual's overall health may suffer. Take steps now to help you and your loved ones stay safe and healthy.

## Slippery Outdoor Surfaces

“Every year as winter sets in, there are many falls that lead to injuries and possible hospitalization,” says Jessica Miskovich, Physical Therapist. Her tips for outdoor safety include:

- Give yourself enough time to get to places so you're not hurrying.
- Wear appropriate footwear with the right fit and good tread.
- Add anti-slip grips on the bottoms of shoes.



- Stay alert and aware, always watching for frost, ice, and uneven surfaces.

## Good Habits in the Home

“Wearing properly fitting, sturdy shoes is also important inside the home,” Miskovich says. She stresses the importance of moving carefully. “Allow your body time to adjust before changing positions,” she says. “When you wake up, sit on the edge of the bed to gain your balance before standing. And when the phone rings, take your time when trying to reach it.”

Consider the following when assessing the safety of your home:

- Clear pathways and minimize clutter.
- Make sure stairways have sturdy handrails.
- Ensure stairways are well lit, and mark the top and bottom steps with fluorescent tape.
- Keep electrical and telephone cords tucked away.
- Remove or secure throw rugs.
- Use nonslip mats in the bathtub and shower.
- Install grab bars in the shower and alongside the toilet.
- Use a nightlight in bathrooms and bedside lamps in bedrooms.
- Keep frequently used items at a reachable height in cupboards and cabinets.
- Store heavy items in lower cupboards.



Jessica Miskovich,  
Physical Therapist

## Review Your Routine

“Wear eyeglasses with the proper prescription, and have your vision checked every year,” Miskovich suggests. “If you have a chronic illness or take medications that may cause dizziness or drowsiness, discuss possible solutions with your physician. Identify problems with balance early and discuss with a physician so actions can be taken to help.”

Maintain a light exercise routine to build strength, coordination, and balance. For individuals recovering from a fall, physical therapy can help regain independence and decrease the risk of falling again. Grand Itasca Clinic & Hospital Physical Therapy Department can develop an individualized exercise program to reduce your risk for falls. Call **218/999-1577** for more information.

## Ask for Help

The winter season is especially dangerous for seniors living alone. If you or a loved one lives alone, have an emergency plan in place. Ask family, friends and neighbors to check in or call periodically. A personal alarm device can also be a lifesaver. PALS Medical Systems Inc. is a Grand Rapids-based business that provides the community with personal alarm devices. Contact Lori or Kelly at **800/852-6575** for more information about PALS.

# BEATING SEASONAL AFFECTIVE DISORDER

## tips on keeping the winter blues away

**J**ody couldn't account for her daily fatigue and feelings of hopelessness. As the winter months wore on, her activity level dropped and her interest in hobbies she once enjoyed stopped. Normally a positive, happy person, Jody recognized she needed help.



Ken Stapleton, L.P.,  
Licensed Psychologist

When cold temperatures keep you stuck indoors, you might get a case of “cabin fever.” But if your mood becomes seriously depressed, like Jody’s, it could be due to the lack of sunlight.

### A Chill in the Air

Ken Stapleton, L.P., Licensed Psychologist at Grand Itasca Clinic & Hospital, identifies the following symptoms of seasonal affective disorder (SAD) that often strikes during the cold months of winter:

- A feeling of sadness that occurs with the change of season.
- Lack of interest or pleasure in activities and hobbies you once enjoyed.
- Increased tiredness and lack of energy.
- An increase or decrease in appetite.
- Unexplained weight gain or loss.
- Feeling restless or irritable.
- Low self-esteem and a sense of hopelessness.

In addition to less daylight, the end of the year often brings additional sources of stress that can affect your mood. According to Stapleton, “Unrealistic holiday expectations take their toll. Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year’s add to winter’s stress. You may look forward to holiday parties and family gatherings, but the extra preparations, financial strain on

budgets, and unresolved family issues often make the blues worse.”

### What Can You Do?

While SAD will go away once the weather becomes warmer and the days grow longer, there are things you can do now to feel better during the winter. Stapleton recommends the following tips for improving your mood and maintaining balance in your life.

**Get enough light.** Go outside for a walk during daylight hours as much as you can, weather permitting. On days you can’t get outside, consider light therapy, where you sit in front of a full spectrum light box for about 20 to 30 minutes per day.

**Exercise daily.** Research shows that even a 10-minute walk can improve your mood for two hours. You can start small with little things such as using the stairs and parking farther away. Build up to 30 minutes of activity a day.

**Follow healthy habits.** Eating healthy, balanced meals, and starting with a decent breakfast, are key. Avoid excessive use of alcohol because it is a depressant and may worsen the situation. Getting enough sleep helps improve your mood and reduces stress.



**Join your friends.** Socializing with positive people is a mood booster. Plan fun activities with your friends and family. Choose people you enjoy spending time with.

**Be good to yourself.** Manage expectations and stress by making a self-care list for yourself, prioritizing responsibilities, and practicing relaxation techniques, such as deep breathing. Remember it’s OK to say no and you don’t have to do everything perfectly.

**Bundle up and embrace the outdoors.** Look for ways to enjoy the winter months such as cross country skiing, snowshoeing, ice fishing, or sledding. We have an abundance of outdoor recreation opportunities in the area.

### When Sunshine Isn’t Enough

If you experience ongoing feelings of sadness, have a loss of interest in activities you previously enjoyed, or are continually fatigued, you may be suffering from more than SAD. You may be suffering from depression. Get help by talking with your medical professional or a therapist. At Grand Itasca Clinic & Hospital, call **218/326-5000** to make an appointment with Ken Stapleton, Licensed Psychologist.

# stay fit in itasca county's winter wonderland

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(about 124 miles) offer plenty of powder for beginner, intermediate, and expert cross-country skiers. Before you strap on the boards, Dr. Rutherford offers these tips:\*

**Check the forecast.** "Skiing is condition-dependent," Dr. Rutherford says. "If it's a really warm day, the snow will be slow because it's wet."

**Dress in layers** that you can remove easily and that are made of fabrics that will stay dry, such as polypropylene or wool. "The ideal temperature is in the 15- to 20-degree range," Dr. Rutherford says. "That may sound cold, but you're working hard so you'll stay warm."

**Get a map** of local ski trails at Itasca Trail Sports or go online to [itascatrailsports.com](http://itascatrailsports.com). Note that

cross-country skiers on public ski trails who are 16 or older must carry a signed Minnesota Ski Pass (\$5 daily or \$15 for the season).

**Join a club.** Meet other local cross-country skiers and learn about local ski events by joining Itasca County's Northern Lights Nordic Ski Club. (A small membership fee is required.)

**Enter a race.** "You don't have to be an Olympic-caliber athlete to participate in winter sports activities," Dr. Rutherford says. "Skiing through the winter months and cross-training in the warmer months with biking and brisk walking or trail running can be part of a lifestyle that keeps you fit and healthy year-round."

\* Consult your physician before starting an exercise program if you have any medical conditions or are concerned about your health.



## what's in your medicine cabinet?

*continued from page 3*

Other ways to help avoid drug interactions include:

- ✓ Read the materials that comes with the drug, including information about possible side effects and interactions.
- ✓ Keep an updated list of all the medications, supplements, vitamins, and herbal products you are taking. "We are promoting this strongly at Grand Itasca," Ingram says. "We want every patient to carry a wallet- or pocket-size card listing all current medications and share the list with your provider each time you visit."
- ✓ Patronize one pharmacy. "If you go to just one pharmacy, the pharmacist will have the most recent record of the prescription drugs and dosages you are on and can more quickly identify possible problems," Ingram says.

Used safely and as prescribed, your medications may help you live a healthier, longer, and more active life. Ask your doctor or pharmacist if you have any questions about the drugs or supplements you are taking or considering.

# What's New at Grand Itasca



## Dan Soular, MD

Dan Soular, MD, joined Grand Itasca on August 25, 2008. Dr. Soular, a native of Hoyt Lakes, Minn., graduated from Hamline University in St. Paul with a Bachelor of Arts in Biology. He attended medical school at the

University of Minnesota in Duluth and the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis, graduating in 2005. He completed his residency in Family Medicine at the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis.

"I am excited to return to Northern Minnesota," says Dr. Soular. "I have always enjoyed the lakes and natural environment in this region. I also like Grand Rapids because it has the large town amenities with a small-town feel."

In addition to his love of the outdoors, Dr. Soular enjoys running, golf, and hockey.

To schedule an appointment with Dr. Soular, call the Grand Itasca appointment line at **218/326-7344**.



## Janna Fultz, RN, FNP

Janna Fultz, RN, FNP, began her practice at Grand Itasca Clinic & Hospital on November 17, 2008. Fultz has a B.A. in Nursing and M.A., Family Nurse

Practitioner, from St. Scholastica. She did her internship at Grand Itasca from January 2007 through April 2008, completing rotations in Pediatrics, Internal Medicine, and Family Practice.

As a family nurse practitioner, she will treat patients working closely with her collaborating physician, Dr. Jack Carlisle. Fultz will focus on general services such as physicals, ear infections, upper respiratory infections and other acute illnesses, but also has special interests in female adolescent health, pediatrics, cardiology, and chronic disease education and prevention.

When she is not spending time with her new son, she also enjoys reading, traveling, photography, hiking, and camping.

To schedule an appointment, please call **218/326-7344**.



## Linnea Soular, DC

Linnea Soular, DC, a board certified chiropractor, joined Grand Itasca on November 1, 2008. Previously, Dr. Soular worked in private practice in White Bear Lake, Minn.

Dr. Soular attended Hamline University and obtained her chiropractic degree from Northwestern Health Sciences University in 2005. She completed internships at Simply Chiropractic in White Bear Lake, Lynlake Chiropractic in Minneapolis, and Langford Chiropractic in St. Paul. Her special interests include all aspects of care for neuromusculoskeletal disorders but she particularly enjoys caring for women, children/infants, and athletic injuries.

Dr. Soular is an avid sports enthusiast, and she enjoys the many opportunities for outdoor recreation that Grand Rapids offers.

To schedule an appointment, call the Grand Itasca appointment line at **218/326-7344**. You do not need a referral to schedule an appointment.

## 2009 medicare premiums, deductibles, co-pays announced

### *Hospital insurance deductible to increase by \$44*

The Medicare Part A hospital insurance deductible will increase by \$44 in 2009 to \$1,068, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services announced Friday, Sept. 19.

The deductible is the patient's only cost for up to 60 days of Medicare-covered inpatient hospital care in a benefit period.

After 60 days, beneficiaries pay daily co-insurance for inpatient hospital care. In 2009, that amount will increase by \$11, to \$267 per day, for days 61-90,

according to a Sept. 19 American Hospital Association News Now story. The amount will go up by another \$22, to \$534, after 90 days, AHA said.

The 2009 standard Medicare Part B monthly premium will be unchanged from this year, at \$96.40, according to the article. The annual deductible will also remain the same, at \$135.

## Grand Itasca Clinic & Hospital

1601 Golf Course Road  
Grand Rapids, MN 55744

Grand Itasca Hospital  
218/326-3401

Clinic Information  
218/326-5000

Clinic Appointments  
218/326-7344

Email: [info@granditasca.org](mailto:info@granditasca.org)  
[www.granditasca.org](http://www.granditasca.org)

### Hours of Operation:

Clinic Hours  
Monday through Thursday 8-6,  
Friday 8-4:30, Saturday 9-noon

Day Surgery  
Monday through Friday 7-5  
and as hospital needs dictate

Emergency Room  
Open 24 hours a day

### Professional Building

111 SE Third Street  
Grand Rapids, MN 55744  
218/326-3401

### Professional Building Hours:

Monday through Thursday 7-6,  
Friday 8-5

Appointments can be made  
during regular business hours.

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# new grand itasca foundation director named

**K**elly Kirwin, a Grand Rapids native, was named the director of the Grand Itasca Foundation. Kelly replaces long-time director Elizabeth Miskovich, who retired in September 2008.



*Kelly Kirwin  
Grand Itasca Foundation Director*

“Having spent more than 10 years away from Minnesota, I felt it was time to move back,” Kirwin says. “I feel fortunate to have been able to find such a wonderful opportunity not only in the state, but within the community where I grew up.”

Kirwin graduated from Wake Forest University in West-Salem, North Carolina, with a B.A. in Communications. Her most recent position was Executive Assistant to the President and General Manager of the Carolina Hurricanes Hockey Club.

Kirwin’s experience with the Hurricanes will prove to be beneficial in her new position as Foundation Director. In addition to her fundraising and event coordinating experience, Kirwin worked as a bridge between the organization and community.

The Grand Itasca Foundation, a local nonprofit corporation, was founded in 1989. The foundation has donated more than \$2 million to Grand Itasca Clinic & Hospital for use in the expansion or development of health care services that meet the ever-changing health care needs of Itasca County and surrounding communities. Dedicated to the values of responsibility and service, the foundation continually seeks to raise funds and provide philanthropic support to the clinic and hospital, as well as, other community health-care related projects.

For more information about Grand Itasca Foundation, contact Kelly Kirwin, Grand Itasca Foundation Director, at **218/999-1009** or [kelly.kirwin@granditasca.org](mailto:kelly.kirwin@granditasca.org).

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1601 Golf Course Road  
Grand Rapids, MN 55744

Look for upcoming  
workshops in  
the Itasca Area  
Community  
Education Catalog,  
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