



801 E. Front Street, Traverse City, Michigan 49686

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[www.grandtraverse.org/scn](http://www.grandtraverse.org/scn)

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*Making longer lives better lives.*

**\*FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE\***

**Date: Wednesday, May 09, 2018**

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**Subject: Returning Champions Defend Title at Senior Odyssey of Michigan**

On Saturday, May 5, two teams of older adults from Grand Traverse County traveled to Grandville to compete in the Senior Odyssey of Michigan. Based on “Odyssey of the Mind,” an international educational program that provides creative problem-solving opportunities for students, the Senior Odyssey helps promote cognitive health and vitality in adults. Allowing adults to use lifelong experiences, knowledge, and skills in new and innovative ways, participants work together to solve “problems” by developing scenarios to address them, and “spontaneous problems,” which require a response in a limited amount of time.

Six teams with five to seven older adults of all abilities from throughout Lower Michigan, competed against each other during the event. A long-term problem titled, “A Stellar Hangout,” required participants to produce a skit with all sorts of aliens from different worlds who, while searching for space treasure, stop, eat, refuel, and relax. The Grand Traverse County Senior Odyssey Team’s skits are available to watch on the Grand Traverse County Senior Center YouTube page.

Team One, composed of Coach Tina Allen, Tom Allen, Donna Desoto, Cheri Garvin, Dave Garvin, Kim Smith, and Rob Smith, won first place with their skit in the long-term problem division, and first place, overall. Team Two, composed of Coach Linda Kelley, Jack Alexander, Nancy O’Hara, Joan Dasef, Marley Navin, Don Simon, and Kathy Scott, won first place for their spontaneous problem-solving, and second place, overall. A new team from Manistee County won third place, overall. Each team received a trophy and medals. The Grand Traverse County team’s trophies are permanently displayed at the Traverse City Senior Center.

It has been reported that the judges appreciated the clever use of puns and costumes during skits by both Grand Traverse County teams. Set to the tune of “My Favorite Things,” Team One described the ideal traits of an alien baby. Team Two ended its skit with a quote made in tribute to a former team member, Bob Nice, who passed away last year. Bob always ended his conversations and e-mails with, “and remember, be nice.”

*The Senior Center Network, part of the Grand Traverse County Parks and Recreation Department, offers diverse programs to older adults in Grand Traverse County. Thousands each year enjoy dozens of activities on a daily basis at locations in Traverse City, Acme, Fife Lake, Interlochen, and Kingsley. Business hours are Monday through Friday, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. For more information, call 231-922-4911, or visit [www.grandtraverse.org/scn](http://www.grandtraverse.org/scn) or our Facebook page.*



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“Grand Traverse County has the most creative older adults in Michigan,” said Ericca Hovie, Program Coordinator. “We placed first in 2016 and first and second in 2017. We couldn’t be more proud of both of our teams!”

If you are interested in participating in this fun, creative event next year, please contact 231-922-4911 or email [ehovie@grandtraverse.org](mailto:ehovie@grandtraverse.org).

**Lori Wells, Manager**

**Grand Traverse County Senior Center Network**

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**Photos attached**

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