

## Thank you Garnet Grove

By Penny Rogers

Focusing his attention on the half-blank canvas in front of him, Garnet Grove reaches into a bright yellow Dole pineapple tin and pulls out another tuft of brown wool. Vanishing briefly from sight, the tuft reappears at the end of a metal hook, beginning yet another row on the 60-inch long rug.

Grove, 90, hands still steady and determined, took up the hobby over a decade ago after his wife Gladys passed away. "When she took the stroke," said Grove, "she had one mat with about 10 inches done, so I finished it and that's what got me started."

But rug hooking would soon take a back seat after Grove received a call from the Gladstone Area Seniors Support Program (GASSP) coordinator Valerie Emerson in late 1999.

For a minimal fee, a driver/escort service is offered in Gladstone that allows area seniors access to medical appointments, social trips or shopping. More than 1,300 such requests are received per year.

"I was quite happy to start driving because it gave me something to do," Grove recalled. "People would ask why I bothered if I was only making (at that time) \$3 a trip, but it wasn't just the \$3, it was what it did for me. It was therapy for me."

On Dec. 7, Grove drove his last trip before removing his name from the GASSP list of drivers.

"I'm coming up 91 in March and I've got a bad knee so I'm walking with a cane and I felt I couldn't be responsible for someone who needed a little bit of assistance," said Grove.

Over the years he racked up an amazing 2,023 trips.

There were many memorable moments from his years as a driver, such as taking Sylvester downtown just for coffee and a chat, or driving Katie and Elsie every Friday morning to get their hair done, or loading cartfuls of groceries in and out of his car.

He spent so much time at the Co-op that he suggested they put in an easy chair for him to sit on while he waited for people to do their shopping.

As much as he will miss the people he drove, the people will miss him too.

"He always went that extra mile," said Emerson. "He picked up their mail, carried their groceries and if they wanted to stop for coffee, he accommodated them that way as well. He was always a gentleman with a kind and caring personality."

But Grove still feels he got the better end of the deal.

"There are all kinds of people doing volunteer work and I think it's an advantage to yourself as well as whoever you are helping," he said. "That's what I got out of being a volunteer. If you knew you had to get somebody someplace by 9:00 in the morning, you got up and away you went and you felt like you were needed."

But now he can get back to that rug he's been neglecting for far too long. According to Grove, it will take him six months to complete.

GASSP has many volunteer drivers, and Grove isn't one to enjoy being singled out.

But perhaps, just this once, he will allow the folks from Gladstone to say thank you.

2,023 times.

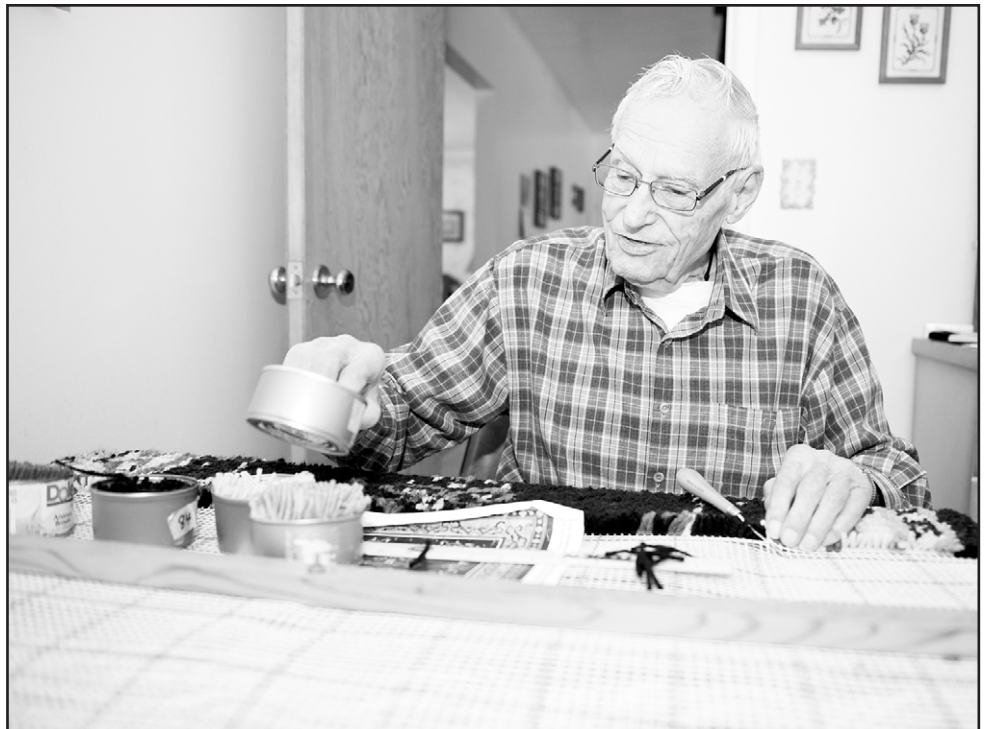


PHOTO BY PENNY ROGERS

Garnet Grove, 90, has more time to spend on hobbies like rug hooking now that he no longer volunteers his time as a driver for seniors in Gladstone.

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## Happy Rock Horseshoes 4-H Club

By Madison Teichroeb

The Happy Rock Horseshoes 4-H Club had a meeting on Dec. 16 at Megan Hall's. There were five members present. We talked about a communications workshop with Ken Essex. Our club's Communications Night is going to be at 7 PM on Feb. 19 at Gladstone United Church.

For our Christmas Party we decided to go for a horse-drawn sleigh ride and go skating. After the meeting, we watched a video on how to lead your horse safely. Then we went outside to play a game to work on our balance. We also made snow angels.

Our next meeting is planned for Jan. 27.

We had our Christmas Party on Dec. 22. We went to Brandon for a horse-drawn

sleigh ride with Terry Marshall. After we warmed up at Tim Horton's we went to the outdoor skating oval and skated for about an hour.

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Patricia McCaskill  
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