The Remember Project

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**PRESS RELEASE**

For Immediate Release

**Mona’s Story on stage in Hudson**

Alive & Kickin and The Remember Project have partnered up with a unique, family-friendly performance that celebrates the older adults in our lives. The performance comes to the Lakeside Park Bandshell in downtown Hudson, Wisconsin on Tuesday, August 24th at 7:00 pm. Audience members are encouraged to arrive early and bring lawn chairs for this free public concert and one-act play. An encore performance will take place in Hopkins on August 26th, also at 7:00 pm

“How do you NOT fall in love with Alive & Kickin?” said Danette McCarthy, Founder of The Remember Project. This chorus gives voice to seniors through personal stories and popular songs, empowering its members to entertain and enlighten multi-generational audiences. The highly inspirational group of spirited and charismatic seniors spread their musical message as they explore music from the last 50 years.

“Alive & Kickin primarily does Rock & Roll,” said Music Director, Jason Hansen, “so we feature artists such as Queen and Jon Bon Jovi. But we also draw from many styles including country, pop and standard classics. We feature many solos and small groups. The entire ensemble is remarkable force and incredible to listen to. The themes inside the songs when the original artists sing them is incredible, but when Alive & Kickin sings them, the meaning gets absorbed in an entirely different way. You hear the songs in an unmistakably new way. The songs are full of energy and spirit.”

This unique concert event follows the story of Mona, an Alive & Kickin company member who is an energetic, active woman closing in on her 80’s. Though an inspiration to others in her public life, Mona’s personal life offers audiences a deeper perspective through the short play “Fortune Cookies” by Bonnie Dudovitz, which is shared in the middle of the concert event. Audiences will be treated to popular Rock & Roll songs like “Stayin Alive” by the Bee Gees and “Don’t Stop Me Now” by Queen.

Written by Bonnie Dudovitz, “Fortune Cookies” is her first play. In it, the character of Mona is a high-energy entrepreneur who always has a project on the front burner. She is the life of the party and her enthusiasm is both funny and charming. Though nearing the age of 80, Mona’s memory is sharp, yet she fears the idea of memory loss and has seen too much of it among friends and neighbors. With Mona as the guide in this brisk 15-minute play, we learn about her plan to counter the effects of potential memory loss and that she is willing to go to great lengths to do so! As the audience gets to know Mona and her son, David, they find themselves with an opportunity to consider one of the biggest hurdles to creating truly dementia-friendly communities: the need to understand how knowledge and compassion are essential to keeping families out of crisis.

Mona and David are played by professional actors Mary Kay Fortier-Spaulding and Darrell Johnston both of Minneapolis under the direction of Danette McCarthy of St. Paul. Alive & Kickin, under the direction of Jason Hansen, will perform two sets of songs to bookend the play – nearly 20 songs in all from “Rock of Ages” by Def Lepard” and “We are the Champions” by Queen to “I Will Survive” by Gloria Gaynor.

“Our ultimate goal,” said Danette McCarthy, “is to help communities think about brain health and to become aware of local resources that support families who are interested in honoring the full continuum of life.”

The program is sponsored by the St. Croix Valley Foundation, the Hammond Arts Alliance, the James & Judith Freund Family Fund, the Dementia Friends Coalition, the Hudson Hospital Foundation, and Paul McCarthy/State Farm Insurance.

The Remember Project [www.rememberproject.org](http://www.rememberproject.org) is a program of Trellis. [www.trellisconnects.org](http://www.trellisconnects.org). Learn more about Alive & Kickin at [www.aliveandkickinmn.org](http://www.aliveandkickinmn.org)

## Date ##

Photo #1: Alive & Kickin

Description: The Alive & Kickin Company brings to life “Mona’s Story: The Older I Get”, a unique program of musical revue and a short play to celebrate the beauty of growing older.

Photo #2: “Fortune Cookies” publicity photo

Description: David, played by Darrell Johnston of Minneapolis, is perplexed by his mother’s new hobby in the play “Fortune Cookies” by Bonnie Dudovitz of Minneapolis.

Photo #3: Headshot – Jason Hansen, Music Director

Description: Jason Hansen has provided music direction for Alive & Kickin since 2012