



Connections

A Quarterly Publication of *Missoula Aging Services*

HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS: CARE SOLUTIONS OFFERS FLEXIBLE SUPPORT

For many, the holiday season is one of the few times during the year that adults and their older loved ones spend quality time together. This may be a time when families discuss the difficult decisions about finding care for an older relative.

Many questions arise about whether an older family member needs support. The Eldercare Locator has produced a guide of "10 warning signs" to help families

and older Americans determine if help is needed. Please see Page 7 for the complete list.

If you are wondering about a loved one's safety at home, it may be time to explore options for long-term care planning. What better holiday gift than to be assured your loved one has the services they need to remain living in their home?

The Care Solutions program at Missoula Aging Services (MAS)

helps families understand and select the services to fit a person's needs, situation and budget. This new case management service is aimed at assisting individuals and their caregivers in creating a living situation that is safe and promotes choice and independence.

Maintaining flexibility is key to the program, says Bernie O'Connor, MAS Elder Services Programs Officer. "A client may only need services for a short time, for example to aid with a transition from a skilled nursing facility back home," he said. "On the other hand, Care Solutions can also assist with long-term case management needs, perhaps as a liaison to families at a distance overseeing care for a loved one in Missoula."

Care Solutions was developed to support independent living in the least restrictive environment for those in the Missoula community who might struggle with daily care needs. The Care Solutions case management team can coordinate assistance in a variety of areas including medication management, transportation, caregiver support, home safety improvement and nutrition. Care

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Issue # 36



THE CEO'S CORNER

Susan Kohler
Chief Executive Officer

It is hard to believe another holiday season is upon us. I see it as a time to reflect on my blessings, to celebrate with friends and family and to reach out to those who are less fortunate than me.

One of my blessings is working for Missoula Aging Services where we make a difference every day in the lives of older adults and those who care for them. Growing older has its wonderful times mixed with its challenging times. That is why we are here. We help older adults maximize their independence regardless of what times they are going through.

Another blessing I have is working with so many wonderful staff and volunteers who dedicate their lives to educating, advocating and providing services and volunteer opportunities to our older community members. You can't pay someone to care, but the governing board, advisory

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Solutions serves adults living in Missoula County. Rates are based on a sliding fee schedule.

We invite you to learn more about Care Solutions as your family explores options for an older family member's care. For referrals to Care Solutions or for more information, please contact MAS at (406) 728-7682.

councils, staff and volunteers clearly care about the work they do. Quality customer service is our aim, and I feel we work hard to accomplish this.

The final blessing I will share is our community and its ongoing generosity from which we benefit. Without the contributions of donors, businesses, families, clients and friends, we would not be able to accomplish our mission. You deserve special recognition for caring about what we do and supporting us in our efforts. As you look at making year end charitable contributions, we would be honored if you would include Missoula Aging Services as one of your choices.

In addition, we find ourselves needing more volunteer drivers for our Meals On Wheels program. If you could spare some time to deliver meals to homebound older adults and people with disabilities, please give us a call at 728-7682. Without our volunteers, it would not be possible for us to serve so many in need.

I wish you all a happy holiday and a grand New Year. Thank you for being a part of my many blessings.

IT WAS LIKE MAGIC!

Missoula Aging Services' (MAS) Information and Assistance Program's staff were able to help many Medicare beneficiaries turn the maze of the Prescription Drug Open Enrollment season into magic.

The deadline for enrolling in a new plan ended December 7, but many of those who reviewed their current drug plans are glad they did. Some beneficiaries saved as much as \$7,000 on premiums and drug costs.

Joyce Chicoine had not reviewed her plan for a few years. She came in and saw a counselor who was able to save her \$677 by switching to a cheaper plan. Another beneficiary who saved \$844, almost opted not to review her plan this year.

CONTROLLING DIABETES REQUIRES SUPPORT AND RESOURCES

By Sara Engberg, RD, LN, Certified Diabetes Care Educator at St. Patrick Hospital.

Statistics predict that by the year 2050, one out of three people will have diabetes in our nation. Among residents aged 65 years and older, 26.9 percent developed diabetes in 2010.

Diabetes is a group of diseases marked by high levels of blood glucose from defects in insulin production, insulin action or both. It can lead to serious complications and premature death.

Diabetes can be scary, but

Chicoine described the process as smooth and simple. "We should try to eliminate (Medicare beneficiaries') fears about reviewing their plans," she said. "With the help of a trained professional, such as those on staff at MAS, it was like magic."

Some of the most dramatic savings came from changing (with their physician's permission) from a brand name drug to a generic.

Missoula Aging Services trained a cadre of volunteers who helped streamline the process and made sure folks had a good experience. From UM Pharmacy students to community volunteers, it was a successful season of savings for seniors during tough times.

Thanks to our staff and excellent volunteers who helped so many have a better new year!

this disease CAN be controlled by working with resources and providers. A primary care provider will provide support and regular monitoring on overall management of a patient's blood glucose, and incorporate medication if needed. A diabetes education team can help guide a person with diabetes to make lifestyle and behavior changes to help. Each person with diabetes requires an individual plan based on what is important to him or her.

Local diabetes support groups

(Continued on Page 7)

IN MEMORIAM

In honor and remembrance of these dedicated individuals who enhanced the lives of those they served. It has been a privilege to have them as our volunteers.

RSVP:

Norma Benjamin
Frances Bumgardner
Phil Catalano
June Fullerton
Mable Harding
Margo Kidder
Winifred Meyer
Bonnie Miller
Dee Smith



We are grateful for recent GIFTS IN HONOR OF INDIVIDUALS

Olga & Marvin Troutwine
Donation Made By:
Charles & Maggie Teague

MANY THANKS TO...

...all the volunteers who helped during the Medicare Part D open enrollment!



Programs of Missoula Aging Services are funded in part through the Montana Dept. of Public Health and Human Services, Corp. for National and Community Service, the Administration on Aging, the City of Missoula and Missoula County. MAS is a United Way recipient agency.



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'TIS THE SEASON TO SHARE OUR GRATITUDE!



At left, children from a Head Start class selected hand-knit mittens and caps made by RSVP volunteers at Missoula Manor.



L to R: Knitters included Mary Box, Betty Kelly, Dorothy Flynn and Carol Williams.

COMMUNITY KINDNESS BENEFITS MAS

Thanks to the Montana Radio Company and area business partners, the Community Kindness Project unites local businesses with nonprofit organizations to help them achieve their missions. First Security Bank has adopted Missoula Aging Services (MAS). Look for a window display about MAS at the MSO Hub on the corner of Main and Higgins December 12-23!

ADVOCATE FOR VOLUNTEERISM HONORED

Kathleen Bartlett recently received special recognition from the Western Montana Volunteer Council (WMVC) for her many years as a leading advocate of volunteerism. She is the first to receive the annual Kathleen Bartlett Award for Outstanding Achievement in Volunteerism. Bartlett has been an active proponent of volunteerism and volunteer management in Missoula for more than 25 years, and she was an original member of the committee that eventually became the WMVC Advisory Council.



Kathleen Bartlett, left, with Susan Kohler.

MAS received a significant legacy gift from the estate of longtime Missoula resident Olga Berger, who passed away Oct. 16, 2010 at the age of 101. Berger was a devoted RSVP volunteer and made her bequest of \$23,100 to that program. She especially loved her work at the Smoke Jumpers Center, which successfully nominated her for Senior of the Year in 1993.

At right, Senior of the Year David Watt volunteers at the Ronald McDonald House as well as in a Head Start class.

2011 SENIORS OF THE YEAR RECOGNIZED

This year 30 Missoula County individuals who represent the important contributions older adults make to our community were recognized as the Missoula County Seniors of the Year. The award celebrates outstanding older adults whose volunteerism, civic engagement and community leadership demonstrate active, healthy aging and improve the quality of life in Missoula County. Nominations come from agencies, organizations, faith communities and individuals throughout the county.

Mayor John Engen attended the event to personally congratulate the recipients. Many thanks to Mountain Water Co. and The Springs at Missoula, for helping make the event possible with their sponsorships.

The 2011 Seniors of the Year represent a talented and diverse population of older adults. Congratulations, one and all!

Maxine Bauer	Carol Israel	Elva Schaper
Richard Blank	Chuck Johnson	Jim Schaper
Karen Bollinger	Patty Koster	Jan Schiedermayer
Bob Brewer	Minkie Medora	Gene Schiedermayer
Nancy Crabtree	Rustem Medora	Jaime Spaulding
Pauline Dean	Barbara Noel	Blanche Tate
Bev Dorian	Bev Phillips	David Watt
Randy Gay	Rosemary Quast	Neil Weare
Al Goddard	Bob Rice	Glen Wood
Eileen Goffe	Adrienne Rogers	Patricia Zapp

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**We are grateful for recent
GIFTS IN MEMORY OF
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In Memory Of:

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Marian Hiatt

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STUDENTS INTERACT WITH RSVP PANEL

“Slow down. Take time to be you,” responded Eileen Kennedy, a panel member participating in Cathy Semmelroth’s “Preparation for Life” class. The question from Hellgate High School juniors and seniors asked what advice panelists would give to young people today.



L to R: Dick Blank, Eileen Kennedy, Ann & Calvin Ashby

Kennedy, Dick Blank and Calvin and Ann Ashby, all volunteers with Missoula Aging Services’ RSVP program, were invited to share information about themselves and field student questions about what it’s like to be an older adult. Semmelroth has convened the panel for several years as a way to foster understanding and positive interaction between the teens and older adults.

Students sometimes were surprised by the answers.

“How is our generation different from yours?” one asked.

“It’s not that different,” Blank, a 72-year-old retired physician, responded. “In some ways it’s more difficult for you young

people, with all the bullying on Facebook. And you kids use the F-bomb way too much.”

Nonjudgmentally, panelists told students they degrade themselves by talking that way.

Ann Ashby, who describes herself as “90 years young,” told the class responsibility, respect

for others and respect for self were the foundation of her youth and still apply today.

“What was your favorite age or period in your life?” another student asked.

Kennedy said without hesitation that right now is her favorite time because she feels free to be herself. Ann Ashby liked the age of mothering their five children. Calvin Ashby, 89, replied that being fully retired is great because they’re financially secure and able to travel more.

Today’s music got mixed reviews from the panel. Kennedy, 78, admitted to listening to some rap and hip-hop with her grandchildren and enjoying the beat, but she doesn’t like the words.

After class, students lingered to ask more questions or thank the panelists. Blank summed up his feelings. “I love coming here and talking to these kids. I feel so energized afterward.”

TEN WARNING SIGNS: YOUR OLDER FAMILY MEMBER MAY NEED HELP

The Eldercare Locator has produced this guide of “10 warning signs” to help families and older Americans determine if help is needed. Any one of the behaviors listed may or may not indicate that an action should be taken. Your family member’s physician should be kept informed of physical or psychological behavior changes. Has your family member:

- Changed eating habits within the last year resulting in weight loss, having no appetite, or missed meals?
- Neglected personal hygiene resulting in wearing dirty clothes, body odor, bad breath, neglected nails and teeth, sores on the skin?
- Neglected their home so it is not as clean or sanitary as you remember growing up?
- Exhibited inappropriate behavior by being unusually loud or quiet, paranoid, agitated, making phone calls at all hours?
- Changed relationship patterns such that friends and neighbors have expressed concerns?
- Had physical problems such as burns or injury marks resulting from general weakness, forgetfulness, or possible misuse of alcohol or prescribed medications?
- Decreased or stopped participating in activities that were previously important to them such as bridge or a book club, dining with friends, or attending religious services?
- Exhibited forgetfulness resulting in unopened mail, piling newspapers, not filling their prescriptions, or missed appointments?
- Mishandled finances such as not paying bills, losing money, paying bills twice or more, or hiding money?
- Made unusual purchases such as buying more than one magazine subscription of the same magazine, entered an unusual amount of contests, increased usage of purchasing from television advertisements?

(Continued from Page 3)

and systems help people with diabetes to not feel so alone. These settings encourage discussion about peaks and valleys of management, as dealing with diabetes is not always easy. It will be less overwhelming with the help of others, rather than doing it alone.

Blood glucose control is the goal. Some people use diet and

exercise, some use oral medication and some use insulin. Whatever the regimen, good control of blood glucose is going to lower a person’s risks for future complications.

For information about local diabetes support and resources, contact St. Patrick Hospital Diabetes Care Service at 329-5781.

MISSOULA AGING SERVICES PROGRAMS

ELDER SERVICES

- Care Solutions
- Family Caregiver Support
- Homemaking Services
- Meals On Wheels
- Ombudsman Program
- Respite Services
- Rural Nutrition Sites
Condon, Seeley Lake, Potomac & Lolo
- Senior Diner Club & Congregate Dining
- Senior Help Line & Resource Center

MISSOULA VOLUNTEER SERVICES

- RSVP
- Foster Grandparents
- Senior Companions
- Western Montana Volunteer Center

STATEWIDE PROGRAMS

- Montana SMP



Our Mission

Missoula Aging Services promotes the independence, dignity and health of older adults and those that care for them through advocacy, education, services and volunteer opportunities.

MissoulaAgingServices.org



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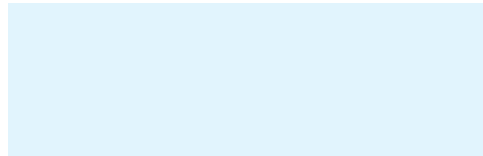
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COMING UP . . .

Introduction to Medicare.....Jan. 10, Feb. 14

Noon, 337 Stephens Ave. Class held monthly on second Tuesday; call the Senior Helpline to register, 728-7682.

Caregiver Support Group.....Dec. 20, Jan. 17, Feb. 21

4 - 5 p.m., third Tuesday of month at MAS, 337 Stephens

Christmas holiday closures.....Dec. 23 & 26

MAS closed Friday and Monday for holiday weekend.

New Year's holiday closure.....Jan. 2, 2012

MAS closed for the New Year's holiday.

Subaru "Share the Love" Event.....Now - Jan. 3

Subaru of America will donate up to \$5 million to five charities this year, one being the Meals On Wheels Association of America. (MOWAA) For each new Subaru sold during this time they will donate \$250 to the charity of your choice. MAS is a member of MOWAA.

MAS Governing Board.....Feb. 6

Noon - 1:30 p.m., 337 Stephens Ave. Open to public.

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.....Jan. 16

MAS closed for the holiday.



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