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MINNESOTA RIVER AREA AGENCY ON AGING®, INC.

MNRAAA NEWS

# From Our Executive Director

Greetings,

Edward Rickenbacker stated “The four cornerstones of character on which the structure of this nation was built are: Initiative, Imagination, Individuality and Independence.” I believe the structure of the Minnesota River Area Agency on Aging®, Inc. (MnRAAA) was also built on these four cornerstones of character. Not only were these cornerstones used to build MnRAAA, they continue to make it a strong and vital agency. I would like to highlight some of the ways the four cornerstones of character were demonstrated during the past year:



Information and assistance staff demonstrated *Initiative* throughout the Medicare Open Enrollment Period. Not only did staff work extra hours to ensure consumers received the assistance they needed, they also worked while many other staff took time off over the holidays.

The *Imagination* of program development and coordination staff was a characteristic that was integral to the development and/or enhancement of local home and community based services. Vision and resourcefulness of staff were essential components of the technical assistance provided to agencies throughout MnRAAA's service area.

The *Individuality* of staff became very apparent when each staff person completed the StrengthsFinder assessment and participated in a workshop on Strengths Based Team Leadership. The top five strengths of each person were identified and together we explored strategies for working together based on each other's unique strengths.

I continued to lead staff from the standpoint of fostering *Independence*. I believe we learn by doing, including the mis-steps we may have as we work toward achieving successful outcomes.

As we begin the New Year and follow our mission of serving as “the gateway to resources for older adults, caregivers and service providers”, I would like to thank the MnRAAA Board members for their on-going support during 2010. I would also like to thank our financial partners, Advisory Council on Aging members, volunteers and the dedicated staff I had the privilege of working with during 2010.

Here's to a Happy New Year and to a productive and rewarding 2011,

Linda Giersdorf

## Mission Statement

The Minnesota River Area Agency on Aging®, Inc. is the gateway to resources for older adults, caregivers and service providers in the twenty-seven counties of southwest Minnesota.

## Food Support Income & Asset Changes

Beginning November 1, 2010 the income and asset limits for the Minnesota Food Support program changed meaning more individuals may now be eligible for the program.

### **Income Limits:**

Increased from 135% to 165% of Federal Poverty Guidelines.

- \$1,490 for a single adult
- \$2,004 for a couple

### **Asset Limits:**

There is no longer an asset limit for the program.

For more information regarding food support and other assistance programs, or for application assistance, contact the Senior LinkAge Line®. The Senior LinkAge Line® is a free service of the Minnesota Board on Aging. Specialists provide in-depth long-term care options counseling; including application assistance, health insurance counseling and helping individuals plan to age well in their home and community.

Call 1-800-333-2433 for assistance or go to [www.MinnesotaHelp.info](http://www.MinnesotaHelp.info) to chat live with a Senior LinkAge Line® specialist. Information on applying is also available through the Food Support Hotline at 1-800-657-3698.

## 2011 Title III Grants & Contracts

### Minnesota River Area Agency on Aging®, Inc 2011 Title III Grants & Contracts

Title III Older Americans Act funds are awarded by MnRAAA through grants/contracts to local public and/or non-profit organizations to develop or expand services for older persons (60+) and their caregivers. Funds are to be used to expand the range of community-based programs and services designed to maintain the independence of older persons in a home environment, to fill gaps in existing services and to contribute to the development of a comprehensive and coordinated system of services.

Continued from Page 2 Grants/Contracts

**TITLE III-B - Continued****TITLE III-B  
SUPPORTIVE SERVICES**

**Project:** Legal Advocacy for Older Americans Project  
**Contractor:** Southern Minn. Regional Legal Services, Inc.  
**Services Provided:** Legal Assistance and Legal Education  
**Counties Served:** 27 counties of MNRAAA  
**Contact Person:** Ray Beckel  
**Telephone:** 507.387.5588

**Project:** One to One Program  
**Grantee:** Western Mental Health Center  
**Service Provided:** Counseling, Telephone Reassurance  
**Counties Served:** Lyon, Murray, Redwood  
**Contact Person:** Rosanne Lasnetski  
**Telephone:** 507.337.4922

**Project:** Volunteer Driver Program  
**Contractor:** Meeker Council on Aging  
**Service Provided:** Transportation  
**County Served:** Meeker  
**Contact Person:** Donna Whitcomb  
**Telephone:** 320.693.0194

**Project:** Senior Transportation  
**Contractor:** Renville County Human Services  
**Service Provided:** Transportation  
**County Served:** Renville  
**Contact Person:** Rachel Schneiderman  
**Telephone:** 320.523.3589

**Project:** K.A.T. Senior Transportation Program  
**Contractor:** Kandiyohi Area Transit  
**Service Provided:** Transportation  
**County Served:** Kandiyohi  
**Contact Person:** Tiffany Collins  
**Telephone:** 320.214.7433

**Project:** Prairie Five RIDES  
**Contractor:** Prairie Five CAC, Inc.  
**Service Provided:** Transportation, Assisted Transportation  
**Counties Served:** Big Stone, Chippewa, Lac qui Parle, Swift, Yellow Medicine  
**Contact Person:** Ted Nelson  
**Telephone:** 320.269.6578

**Project:** Montevideo Chore Service  
**Contractor:** City of Montevideo  
**Service Provided:** Chore  
**County Served:** Chippewa  
**Contact Person:** Diane Ostlie  
**Telephone:** 320.269.9375

**Project:** Granite Falls Intergenerational Chore Service  
**Contractor:** Yellow Medicine East Community Education  
**Service Provided:** Chore  
**Counties Served:** Chippewa, Yellow Medicine  
**Contact Person:** Heather Velde  
**Telephone:** 320.564.0947

**Project:** Caring Connection  
**Grantee:** VINE Faith in Action  
**Service Provided:** Counseling  
**County Served:** Blue Earth, Nicollet  
**Contact Person:** Mary O'Sullivan  
**Telephone:** 507.387.1666

**Project:** East African Elder Refugees Transition to Community  
**Grantee:** Coalition of African Community Services  
**Service Provided:** Counseling  
**County Served:** Kandiyohi  
**Contact Person:** Abdi Duh  
**Telephone:** 320.223.3510

**Project:** Telephone Reassurance Program  
**Grantee:** Yellow Medicine East Community Education  
**Service Provided:** Telephone Reassurance  
**Counties Served:** Chippewa, Yellow Medicine  
**Contact Person:** Heather Velde  
**Telephone:** 320.564.0947

**Project:** TLC Telephone Reassurance Program  
**Grantee:** City of Montevideo  
**Service Provided:** Telephone Reassurance  
**Counties Served:** Chippewa  
**Contact Person:** Diane Ostlie  
**Telephone:** 320.269.9375

**Project:** RSVP Telephone Reassurance  
**Grantee:** RSVP of Southwest Minnesota  
**Service Provided:** Telephone Reassurance  
**Counties Served:** Cottonwood, Lincoln, Murray, Nobles, Redwood, Rock  
**Contact Person:** Karen Christensen  
**Telephone:** 507.627.1016

**TITLE III-C1 & III-C2  
CONGREGATE & HOME DELIVERED MEALS**

**Project:** LSS Congregate & Home Delivered Meals Programs  
**Contractor:** Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota  
**Service Provided:** Congregate Meals  
**Counties Served:** Blue Earth, Brown, Cottonwood, Faribault, Jackson, Kandiyohi, Le Sueur, Lincoln, Lyon, Martin, McLeod, Meeker, Murray, Nicollet, Nobles, Pipestone, Redwood, Renville, Rock, Sibley, Waseca, Watonwan  
**Contact Person:** Monica Douglas  
**Telephone:** 800.488.4146

Continues, see page 4

Continued from Page 3 Grants/Contracts

**TITLE III-C1 & III-C2 - continued**

**Project:** Prairie Five Congregate & Home Delivered Meals Programs

**Contractor:** Prairie Five CAC, Inc.

**Service Provided:** Congregate Meals

**Counties Served:** Big Stone, Chippewa, Lac qui Parle, Swift, Yellow Medicine

**Contact Person:** Gail Jerve

**Telephone:** 320.269.7512

**TITLE III-D****HEALTH PROMOTION AND DISEASE PREVENTION SERVICES**

**Project:** Medication Management Program

**Grantee:** VINE Faith in Action

**Service Provided:** Medication Management

**Counties Served:** Blue Earth, Brown, Faribault, Le Sueur, Nicollet, Watonwan

**Contact Person:** Karen Christy

**Telephone:** 507.345.5262

**TITLE III-E****NATIONAL FAMILY CAREGIVER SUPPORT SERVICES**

**Project:** Caregiver Support and Respite Program

**Grantee:** Interfaith Caregivers – Faith in Action in Faribault County

**Service Provided:** Caregiver Counseling, In-Home Respite

**Counties Served:** Faribault, Martin

**Contact Person:** Merry McGowan

**Telephone:** 507.526.4684

**Project:** Brown and Sibley Counties Caregiver Support and Respite Program

**Grantee:** Services for Seniors in Brown & Sibley Counties DBA Sibley County Faith in Action

**Service Provided:** Caregiver Counseling, In-Home Respite

**County Served:** Brown, Sibley

**Contact Person:** Julie Terrell

**Telephone:** 507.354.5370

**Project:** Family Caregiver Project

**Grantee:** Wellspring Faith in Action

**Service Provided:** Caregiver Counseling

**County Served:** Watonwan

**Contact Person:** Kim Askeland

**Telephone:** 507.375.1276

**TITLE III-E - continued**

**Project:** RSVP Respite and Counseling

**Grantee:** RSVP of Southwest Minnesota

**Service Provided:** Caregiver Counseling, In-Home Respite

**Counties Served:** Cottonwood, Lincoln, Murray, Nobles, Redwood, Rock

**Contact Person:** Karen Christensen

**Telephone:** 507.627.1016

**Project:** LSS Caregiver Support and Respite

**Grantee:** Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota

**Services Provided:** Caregiver Counseling, In-Home Respite

**Counties Served:** Kandiyohi, McLeod, Meeker, Renville

**Contact Person:** Monica Douglas

**Telephone:** 888.488.4146

**Project:** CARE: Caregiver and Resource Education

**Grantee:** Prairie Five CAC, Inc.

**Service Provided:** Caregiver Counseling

**Counties Served:** Big Stone, Chippewa, Lac qui Parle, Swift, Yellow Medicine

**Contact Person:** Gail Jerve

**Telephone:** 320.269.7512

**Project:** CCMH Dementia Support

**Grantee:** Chippewa County-Montevideo Hospital

**Service Provided:** Caregiver Counseling, In-Home Respite

**Counties Served:** Chippewa, Yellow Medicine

**Contact Person:** Gretchen Reeves

**Telephone:** 320.321.8266

**Project:** One to One Transition Program

**Grantee:** Western Mental Health Center

**Service Provided:** In-Home Respite

**Counties Served:** Lyon

**Contact Person:** Rosanna Latneski

**Telephone:** 507.337.4922

**For More Information Contact:**

**Rhonda Hiller Fjeldberg**



**Grant/Contract Manager**

**507.389.8862 or [rhonda@rndc.org](mailto:rhonda@rndc.org)**



## Help Older Adults Stay Connected Through Technology

Over the last several years, older adults have been the fastest growing segment of the online population. People over the age of 60 are using Facebook, Google, Yahoo and YouTube. They are emailing, texting and blogging and it is having a positive impact on their lives as they are communicating more frequently with family, reconnecting with old friends, keeping up with community developments and managing their health issues. Eldercare Locator released a guide with tips and information to help the aging population get more familiar with technology tools while also helping them make smart decisions about how to be safe online.

"In every senior center I visit, the staff and elders proudly show me two things: their computer lab and their workout room. Both are encouraging signs of active aging," said Kathy Greenlee, Assistant Secretary for Aging, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. "Today's technologies have a lot to offer older adults, if they understand how to use the tools in safe and smart ways. It is our hope that families will get together and use our tips as the starting point for a conversation with their older relatives about how they can stay connected by using these innovations."

Recent studies have shown that the aging population has become especially receptive to social media. According to an eMarketer report, nearly 47% of Baby Boomers actively maintained a profile on the social web in 2009, up 15% from 2008, and so do 36% of "Matures" (individuals between 63-75). Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life report this year found that social networking has almost doubled for people ages 50 and older — growing from 22 percent to 42 percent over the past year.

Eldercare Locator's **"Staying Connected: Technology Options for Older Adults"** guide takes users through the basic facts about how to use tools like Facebook, email and texting, including privacy and safety information.

The guide also introduces YouTube, Twitter, Skype, Instant Messaging and blogging — all tools that older adults can use to stay connected.

Connectivity for older adults results in a better quality of life and technology can really have a positive impact if used appropriately. To view the technology guide, visit [www.n4a.org](http://www.n4a.org).



**"Older Americans:  
Connecting the  
Community"**  
  
**Theme for Older  
Americans month,  
May 2011**

### Your Opinion Matters!

Please share your feedback with us. If you would like to read about specific topics in future MNRAAA News or to request MNRAAA News by email, contact me at:

[erica@rndc.org](mailto:erica@rndc.org) or  
507.389.8879



## Winter Preparation

### FEMA Encourages Seniors and People with Special Needs to Prepare for Winter

Winter weather requires a resetting of the preparedness refresh button for millions of elderly Americans and those with physical, medical, sensory or cognitive disabilities. Extreme cold and harsh winter storms can dramatically increase the daily hardships and day to day survival challenges for this population.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) says that now is the time to take a few easy steps to prepare for emergencies.

FEMA officials urge seniors and people with disabilities to:

- Make prior arrangements with your physician or check with your oxygen supplier about emergency plans for those on respirators or other electronically powered medical equipment.
- Plan now to have electrical backup for medical equipment.
- Develop a back-up communications plan in case land lines are disrupted by having a charged cell phone or a pager.
- Maintain a two-week supply of medications, both prescription and non-prescription.
- Have copies of your medical records, prescriptions and medical needs readily available.
- Plan now to have accessible transportation in case of evacuation.
- Have contact lenses, extra eyeglasses and batteries for hearing aids ready to go.
- Include your service animals and pets in your plans.

Think ahead about neighborhood shelters that can accommodate the needs of seniors and the disabled.



FEMA also recommends that people with special needs develop and stay in touch with a nearby network of assistance before winter storms or record cold move in. It's important for neighbors, relatives, care attendants, friends and coworkers to be part of your care and communications circle. Never depend on one person alone.

Severe winter weather including snow, subfreezing temperatures, strong winds, ice or even heavy rain requires planning ahead.

FEMA recommends an emergency supply kit that includes:

- A battery or hand crank powered radio, extra flashlights and batteries, and at minimum a week's supply of food and water.
- Adequate clothing and blankets for warmth.
- First Aid supplies.

Remember that planning ahead, assembling an emergency supply kit, staying informed and keeping those in your circle informed about you are the best ways to stay safe through the uncertain days of winter.

## Cultural Diversity Strategies

The Older Americans Act (OAA) emphasizes the provision of services to older adults and their caregivers from diverse cultures. All OAA services must be targeted and accessible to persons of various ethnic, socio-economic status, religion, disabilities, immigrants, refugees and gender status.

The Administration on Aging (AoA) offers guiding principles for professionals working with diverse cultures. For example, service quality is dependent upon respect, inclusion, and sensitivity. Second, serving diverse populations begins with identifying the population's values and perceptions.

## Medicare Part A Hospital Cost Sharing 2011

Deductible - \$1,132 per benefit period for Days 1-60

Coinsurance:

- \$283 a day for 61<sup>st</sup> – 90<sup>th</sup> day each benefit period
- \$566 a day for 91<sup>st</sup> – 150<sup>th</sup> day each benefit period

Also known as “Lifetime Reserve Days”

Skilled Nursing Facility

Coinsurance:

\$141.50 a day for 21<sup>st</sup> – 100<sup>th</sup> day each benefit period



### MEDICARE PART B MEDICAL PREMIUMS 2011

- Monthly - \$115.40
- Some Medicare Beneficiaries will continue to pay \$96.40 or \$110.50

Current Medicare Part B enrollees (before 1/1/2011) that have their premiums withheld from their SSA check and have incomes below \$85,000 for a single and \$170,000 for a couple

### MEDICARE PART B DEDUCTIBLE 2011

Annual - \$162

### SOCIAL SECURITY COST OF LIVING INCREASE 2011

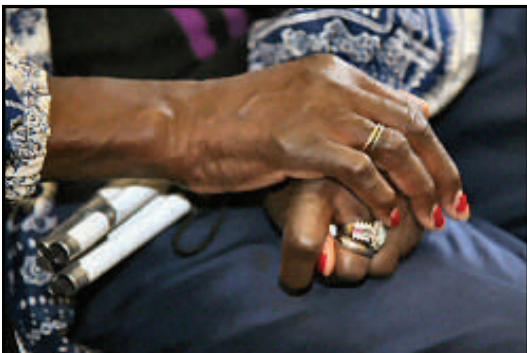
There is not a Cost of Living Increase (COLA) for 2011



If you have questions about your Medicare coverage or costs associated with Medicare, contact the Senior LinkAge Line® at 1-800-333-2433. The Senior LinkAge Line® is a service of the Minnesota Board on Aging and the Minnesota River Area Agency on Aging®, Inc.

Continued from Page 6 Diversity

Third, it is important to recognize that individuals have unique life experiences that shape one's world view. Factors that influence life experiences include age, gender, race, geographic location, education, socio-economic status, professional and personal roles, and family values, to name a few.



The challenge for service providers is to address client needs through the lens of individual perspectives, while finding solutions that meet with organization resources. The AoA offers four steps towards planning services for diverse communities. First, conduct an organizational assessment of bylaws, internal processes, and community perceptions. Second, identify resources and demographics of the local community. Seek partnerships with representatives from diverse groups. Third, work within local diversity resources to identify perceived barriers to reaching interested individuals. Finally, communicate lessons learned and develop plan for organizational changes leading to a culturally competent organization.

Source: A Toolkit for Serving Diverse Communities, U. S. Administration on Aging, 2010.



## Our Staff

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Willmar photo currently not available



**Minnesota River Area Agency on Aging®, Inc.**

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*Return Service Request*

## **Our Board**

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Willmar
- Maureen Melgaard-Schneider, *Secretary*  
Atwater
- Susan Meyer  
Olivia
- Francis Schweiss, *Alternate*  
Fairfax
- Howard Janssen  
Ortonville
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Sleepy Eye
- Candace Fenske  
Madelia
- Daniel Sasaro Brewer  
Lakefield
- Sylvan Struck, *Treasurer*  
Sherburn
- Lori Ruthenbeck  
Mankato
- Jim Berg, *Alternate*  
New Ulm
- Bill Sauer, *Chair*  
Fulda
- David Benson  
Bigelow
- Maddy Forsberg  
Slayton
- Larry Hansen, *Alternate*  
Tyler