

In This Volume:

- From Our Executive Director
- Senior LinkAge Line®, One Stop Shop
- Slayton Office Spotlight
- National Memory Screening Day
- Caring for an Aging Parent
- Changes to Medicare Enrollment Periods
- Suicide Prevention Awareness
- MNRAAA Staff and Board



From Our Executive Director



Dear Readers:

Fall is among us! One cannot travel far without taking in the beautiful colors and rapidly changing foliage. The change in season reminds me of the demographic changes taking place around us. On a regular basis we hear about the “aging of the population”. Whether we read about it in a newspaper or view it on television, the message is the same – over the next two decades, much of the world will experience unprecedented demographic changes.

Here’s what we know about the “aging of the population”:

- Baby Boomers (individuals born 1946-1964) began turning 65 in January 2011.
- Retirements in health care professions, along with long-run inadequate numbers of graduates from medical and nursing schools, will create a growing problem in the provision of health services. This will occur at the same time that demand for health care services rises sharply.
- The ratio of workers to retirees will fall from 5 per retiree in 2010 to 3 per retiree in 2030.
- By 2020, Minnesota will have as many people age 65+ as kids in K-12 education.
- The average caregiver for an elderly loved one age 85+ is between the ages of 50 and 64.
- Nineteen counties in Minnesota have a median age over 45.
- Most of the increase in the 65+ population in Minnesota will occur in the metro area, especially in suburban counties.
- A growing number of rural counties will experience chronic natural decrease (more deaths than births).

If you would like to locate additional demographic information, you can visit <http://www.demography.state.mn.us> which includes data from the 2010 Census. On this site, you’ll find a map of Minnesota. By clicking on a county, the total population will be displayed, as well as a graph of the county’s population from 1960 – 2010.

Another interesting website is <http://columbia.news21.com/our-future-selves/>. This site includes Columbia’s Brave Old World report, which is part of the Carnegie-Knight Initiative on the Future of Journalism Education, led by 12 leading universities.

(Continues Page 2)

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.

Senior LinkAge Line®: A One Stop Shop for Minnesota Seniors

Since 1997, many older adults in Minnesota have relied on the Senior LinkAge Line®, a statewide service of the Minnesota Board on Aging and Area Agencies on Aging, as their first call for assistance when experiencing questions or issues on a variety of subjects. Most widely known for long-term care, Medicare expertise and helping older adults age well in the community, the Senior LinkAge Line® is also often used for helping Minnesota seniors and their caregivers to find answers to other questions that may involve state agencies, such as how to handle a driver's license that has been revoked or determining if a professional holds a current license. Because of the extensive knowledge of the Senior LinkAge Line® specialists, as well as the increasing popularity of the line, when Lt. Governor Yvonne Prettner Solon

had a vision for a One Stop Shop for Minnesota Seniors, it made sense to expand the existing Senior LinkAge Line®.

The newly expanded Senior LinkAge Line®: A One Stop Shop for Minnesota Seniors can now quickly assist Minnesotans with a variety of subjects and issues that require the expertise of other state agencies. With one call,

Line® One Stop Shop specialist can chat with a staff from the Minnesota Department of Revenue to find an answer for the caller. This virtual network is made possible through the use of Revation, a specialized chat and call system. The Senior LinkAge Line®: A One Stop Shop for Minnesota Seniors will continue to expand over the next year with connecting seniors to volunteer and employment opportunities.

To seek assistance with any area concerning Minnesota seniors and their caregivers, call the Senior LinkAge Line®: A One Stop Shop for Minnesota Seniors at 1-800-333-2433. Specialists are also available through online chat at www.MinnesotaHelp.info®. Hours of operation are Monday through Friday from 8:30am to 4:30pm. Voicemail is available after hours.

A One Stop Shop for Minnesota Seniors



a specialist can connect the caller to appropriate state agency staff that can directly assist the caller without requiring a second, or even third, call to be made. For example, if a senior has questions regarding their property tax, a Senior LinkAge

(Continued from Page 1 Executive Director)

Reporting for a second year, Columbia's News21 team explored the ways an unprecedented demographic shift will bring changes that will affect each of us. The report includes "Our Future Selves" which has an interactive feature, "Aging Town", "Family Caregiving", "Senior Living" and "Graying Workplace". Each of these sections includes videos on specific topics. "Aging Town" includes the video "Strapped" that highlights Meals on Wheels in Aiken, South Carolina.



I will provide additional demographic information in upcoming editions of MNRAAA News as datasets from the 2010 Census are released. Stay tuned!

Happy Reading,

Linda Giersdorf

Source: Minnesota State Demographic Center, *The Long Run Has Become the Short Run – Budget Implications of Demographic Change*

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month. Monthly self breast exams are important to women of all ages. Remind a friend, sister, wife or daughter. 



Slayton Office Spotlight

**Information and Assistance Through the
Senior LinkAge Line®
A One Stop Shop for Minnesota Seniors**

The Senior LinkAge Line® (SLL) is a statewide information and assistance service of the Minnesota Board on Aging and is provided locally through six Area Agencies on Aging including the Minnesota River Area Agency on Aging®, Inc. It is available Monday-Friday 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., through a toll-free number (1-800-333-2433), as well as online (www.minnesotahelp.info) via live chat or secure e-mail.

Julie Stewart and Katie Gillette are Information and Assistance Specialists. They provide individualized, in-depth, phone-based assistance to older adults, caregivers, service providers and others. Julie has been with MNRAAA since 2005 and Katie since 2009.

Gail Radke is the Senior Outreach Specialist. She provides one-to-one assistance, which complements the SLL phone-based and online system. She is available to conduct community presentations such as “What’s New in Medicare”, “Consumer Fraud” and “Long Term Care Partnership”. She also coordinates counseling sites, benefits evaluations and Senior Surf Days. Gail works primarily in Cottonwood, Jackson, Lincoln, Lyon, Murray, Nobles, Pipestone, Redwood and Rock counties (nine county area). In addition, she is the Call Center Coordinator for the SW PSA. Gail was an information and assistance specialist at the Southwest Area Agency on Aging from 2003-2004 and has been with MNRAAA since 2005.

If you would like to schedule an appointment to learn more about the SLL, or schedule a community presentation, contact Gail.

Nicole Brandt is the MinnesotaHelp Network™ Return to Community (RTC) Specialist. She conducts 90 day assessments on individuals who have been discharged to the community from a nursing home. With the individual’s consent, she provides phone-based follow-up for up to 5 years, including phone-based long-term care options counseling and resource information to empower the consumer to remain as independent as possible. Nicole works with individuals from throughout Minnesota and has been with MNRAAA since 2009. For more information about the Return to Community Initiative, contact Nicole.

Linda Tobias is an Information and Assistance Specialist who works within the MinnesotaHelp Network™ Client Services Center (CSC). CSC assists consumers throughout Minnesota on complex Medicare Part D issues. Linda works directly with staff of the SLL, Disability Linkage Line® and Veterans Linkage Line™. Linda handles live chat and secure e-mail questions via MinnesotaHelp Now!. Linda was an information and assistance specialist at the Southwest Area Agency on Aging from 1999-2004 and has been with MNRAAA since 2005.



[Julie Stewart](#)



[Katie Gillette](#)



[Gail Radke](#)



[Nicole Brandt](#)



[Linda Tobias](#)

(Continues Page 5)



ALZHEIMER'S FOUNDATION OF AMERICA

National Memory Screening Day®



The Alzheimer's Foundation of America invites aging services providers to participate in its 9th annual National Memory Screening Day on November 15. Providers can host a screening, encourage people with memory concerns to be screened, post information about the event, and help spread the word.

[Click here to participate or for more information!](http://nationalmemoryscreening.org/index.php) (<http://nationalmemoryscreening.org/index.php>)

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 us at:

erica@rndc.org or
507.389.8879

Caring for an Aging Parent?

National Family Caregiver Support Program 10th Anniversary

Of Minnesota's 679,000 family caregivers, nearly 60% or 407,000 are working, with the majority working full-time. Caregiving can be challenging. Most caregivers find it difficult to juggle work, family life and personal needs without support. Yet, they are not aware of the many supports available to them and their aging family members.

This year marks the 10th Anniversary of the National Family Caregiver Support program and is a time to recognize and celebrate the important contributions of family caregivers and to increase awareness of services and supports towards improving the health and well-being of Minnesota caregivers and the older adults receiving care.

Family Caregiver Support Programs funded in the MNRAAA service area include:

- Caregiver Support and Respite Program serving Faribault and Martin counties - 507.526.4684

(Continues Page 5)

Medicare Periods



Changes to Enrollment

There are important changes in the Medicare enrollment periods. If you do not make changes during these new enrollment periods, in most cases you will not be able to make changes again until 2013.

Medicare Annual Election Period October 15 through December 7, 2011: The dates of the Medicare Annual Election Period have changed for 2011. If you wish to change Medicare Part D or Medicare Advantage coverage for 2012, all changes must be made between October 15, 2011 and December 7, 2011. Coverage will then begin January 1, 2012.

Medicare Advantage Disenrollment Period January 1 through February 14, 2012: You have an opportunity to disenroll from a Medicare Advantage plan and return to Original Medicare with a Stand Alone Part D plan from January 1, 2012 through February 14, 2012. If you make this change in January you will be returned to Original Medicare February 1, 2012. However, if you wait until February you will not be returned to Original Medicare until March 1, 2012.

The Senior LinkAge Line® is a free service of the Minnesota Board on Aging, as well as the State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP). Specialists provide one-to-one assistance with all Medicare and health insurance issues and also provide in-depth long-term care options counseling. Call 1-800-333-2433 for assistance or go to www.MinnesotaHelp.info to chat live with a Senior LinkAge Line® specialist.

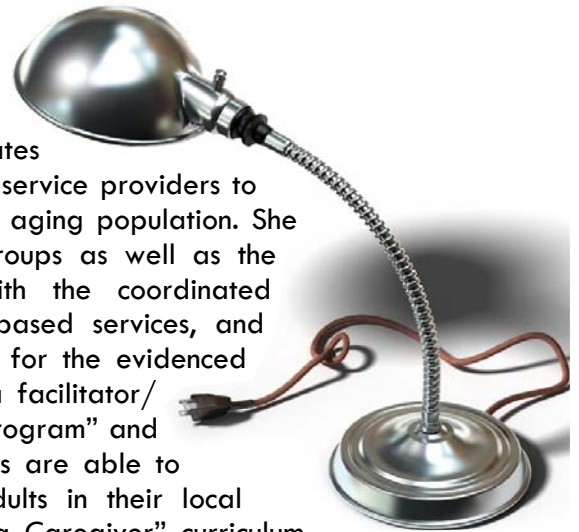
(Continued Page 3 Spotlight)

System Development



[Robin Weis](#)

Robin Weis is a system developer and works primarily in the nine county area. Robin collaborates with communities, counties and health and social service providers to increase local capacity to meet the needs of an aging population. She coordinates several long term care network groups as well as the discharge planner network. She assists with the coordinated development of caregiver supports, volunteer-based services, and community resources. Robin is a Master Trainer for the evidenced based program, “A Matter of Balance” and a facilitator/leader for “Chronic Disease Self-Management Program” and “Powerful Tools for Caregivers”. Master Trainers are able to teach others to facilitate classes for older adults in their local communities. She is a trainer for the “Minnesota Caregiver” curriculum and “Live Well at Home” model and is available to provide training throughout the SW PSA. She works closely with the Veteran Directed Home and Community Based Services (VD-HCBS) program. VD-HCBS targets Veterans of any age who are enrolled in the Sioux Falls Veterans Administration Medical Center, reside in Lac qui Parle, Yellow Medicine, Lyon, Lincoln, Pipestone, Murray, Cottonwood, Rock, Nobles, Jackson or Martin Counties, and need nursing facility level of care. Robin was an information and assistance specialist and program developer at the Southwest Area Agency on Aging from 1998-2004 and has been with MNRAAA since 2005.



If you would like to discuss developing or enhancing a program for older adults, receive information about or scheduling evidence based programs or have questions about the VD-HCBS program, contact Robin.

Administration

The administrative functions of MNRAAA primarily come via the Mankato office, however staff from the Slayton office is responsible for functions related to the southwest Advisory Council on Aging (ACA). The ACA meets approximately 6 times per year. ACA members are asked to participate on specific task forces and report local changes about long term care services to staff.

Staff from the Slayton office has approximately 43 years of experience working in an area agency on aging. MNRAAA encourages you to utilize their expertise!

(Continued from Page 4 Aging Parent)

- McLeod, Meeker and Renville counties - 888.488.4146
- CARE: Caregiver and Resource Education serving Big Stone, Chippewa, Lac qui Parle, Swift and Yellow Medicine counties - 320.269.7512
- CCMH Dementia Support serving Chippewa and Yellow Medicine counties - 320.321.8266
- One to One Transition Program serving Lyon County - 507.337.4922
- Brown and Sibley Counties Caregiver Support and Respite Program serving Brown and Sibley counties - 507.354.5370
- Family Caregiver Project serving Watonwan County - 507.375.1276
- RSVP Respite and Counseling serving Cottonwood, Lincoln, Murray, Nobles, Redwood and Rock counties - 507.627.1016
- LSS Caregiver Support and Respite Program serving Kandiyohi,

Emergencies and disaster can strike quickly and without warning forcing you to evacuate your neighborhood or causing confinement to your home. What would you do if your basic services – water, gas, electricity or communications were cut off? Visit [Disaster Preparedness for Seniors By Seniors \(www.redcross.org\)](http://www.redcross.org) to learn how to protect yourself and cope with disaster by planning ahead*.

*Source: Disaster Preparedness for Seniors By Seniors



(See poster page 7)



If what the world sees on the outside...

is different than what you see on the inside



Then they need your help.

Suicide and mental illness in seniors is not a normal part of growing old. Talk to their family, a doctor or healthcare professional and get help. To find out more about the warning signs and how to prevent suicide in seniors call **800-511-SAVE** or go to **save.org**.

Suicide Shouldn't Be Part of Aging • www.save.org

Originally produced in cooperation with MN Dept. of Health.

**NATIONAL
SUICIDE
PREVENTION
LIFELINE™
1-800-273-8255
www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org**

Caring for an Aging Parent?

Find Balance Between Work and Caregiving

Juggling the competing demands of work and caregiving can be challenging. Most working caregivers want to excel at both. The most successful solutions will work for both you and your employer.



A One Stop Shop for Minnesota Seniors

TIPS TO FINDING BALANCE:

- Talk to your supervisor or human resources staff about your caregiving and work responsibilities.
- Learn about possible job modifications, such as flex time or reduced hours.
- Find two people who can help your parent while you're at work.
- Call the Senior LinkAge Line® to learn about resources in your area. Ask for a Caregiver Consultant who can help you balance work and caregiving.

Our Staff

Mankato Office:

10 Civic Center Plaza, Suite 3 • PO Box 3323
 Mankato, MN 56002-3323
Ph: 507.389.8879 • **Fx:** 507.387.7105
Hours: 8 AM - 4:30 PM • Monday - Friday

- Linda Giersdorf, Executive Director
linda@rncd.org 507.389.8866
- Rhonda Hiller Fjeldberg, Grant/Contract Manager
rhonda@rncd.org 507.389.8862
- Erica Gahlon, Administrative Assistant
erica@rncd.org 507.389.8879
- Robin Thompson, Senior Outreach Specialist
robint@rncd.org 1.800.333.2433 x:82016
- Gail Gilman-Waldner, Program Developer
ggwaldner@rncd.org 507.389.8869
- Elaine Spain, Program Developer
espain@rncd.org 507.389.8860
- Stephanie McCabe, Senior Outreach Specialist
stephanie@rncd.org 1.800.333.2433 x: 82004
- Heather Lincoln, Community Living Specialist
heather@rncd.org 1.800.333.2433 x: 82007

Southeast Area



L to R Back Row: Heather Lincoln, Robin Thompson, Erica Gahlon, Stephanie McCabe
L to R Front Row: Rhonda Hiller Fjeldberg, Linda Giersdorf, Elaine Spain (Gail Gilman-Waldner not pictured)

Slayton Office:

2401 Broadway Ave., Suite 2 • Slayton, MN 56172
Ph: 507.836.8547 • **Fx:** 507.836.8866
Hours: 8 AM - 4:30 PM • Monday - Friday

- Robin Weis, Aging Program Director
rlinkage@swrdc.org 507.836.1642
- Gail Radke, Contact Center Coordinator/Sr. Outreach Specialist
gailr@swrdc.org 1.800.333.2433 x: 82006
- Linda Tobias, Client Services Center
lindat@swrdc.org 1.800.333.2433 x: 82012
- Julie Stewart, Information & Assistance Specialist
julies@swrdc.org 1.800.333.2433 x: 82008
- Nicole Brandt, Information & Assistance Specialist
nicole@swrdc.org 1.800.333.2433 x: 82020
- Katrina Gillette, Information & Assistance Specialist
katrina@swrdc.org 1.800.333.2433 x: 82022

Southwest Area



L to R Back Row: (Danielle Comstock, formerly of MnRAAA), Julie Stewart, Linda Tobias, Nicole Brandt
L to R Front Row: Gail Radke, Robin Weis, Katie Gillette

Willmar Office:

333 Sixth Street SW, Suite 2 • Willmar, MN 56201
Ph: 507.836.8547 • **Fx:** 507.836.8866
Hours: 8 AM - 4:30 PM • Monday - Friday

- Kate Selseth, Aging Program Director
kate.selseth@mmdc.org 320.235.8504 x: 251
- Ashley Ellingson, Senior Outreach Specialist
ashley.ellingson@mmdc.org 1.800.333.2433 x: 82024

Northwest & Northeast Area



L to R: Ashley Ellingson, Kate Selseth

Minnesota River Area Agency on Aging®, Inc.

PO Box 3323
Mankato MN 56002-3323

Return Service Request



Our Board

- DuWayne Underthun, *Vice Chair*
Willmar
- Maureen Melgaard-Schneider, *Secretary*
Atwater
- Susan Meyer
Olivia
- Francis Schweiss, *Alternate*
Fairfax
- Howard Janssen
Ortonville
- James Broich
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