



MINNESOTA RIVER AREA AGENCY ON AGING®, INC.

MNRAAA NEWS

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Volume IV, Issue III ♦ 10.25.13



Dear Readers,

The past several weeks have been especially busy for MNRAAA Board members and staff. Several of our Board members served on our Budget Committee and assisted staff with the development of our 2014 budgets. This involved several meetings and telephone conference calls. Board members also served on the Nutrition Services Review Committee. Their work was especially challenging due to the reduction in the amount of funding available for nutrition providers in 2014. The committee reviewed the nutrition contract renewal proposals, interviewed the nutrition contract proposers and made recommendations for funding to the MNRAAA Board.

Advisory Council on Aging members served on the 2014 Title III Funding Task Force. They had the daunting task of reviewing 20+ grant applications/grant proposals and spending two days interviewing applicants/proposers. Members then made funding recommendations to the MNRAAA Board.

MNRAAA Board members met and awarded funding to applicants and proposers for calendar year 2014 and approved the submittal of the 2014 Area Plan to the Minnesota Board on Aging.

Senior LinkAge Line® volunteers are in the midst of Medicare Open Enrollment. They are busy providing assistance at Medicare Open Enrollment sites throughout our service area. Five seasonal employees began work in the Mankato office on October 1 and will continue providing telephone assistance to Medicare beneficiaries through the end of the Medicare Open Enrollment period.

And then there's the staff. Whether it's our fiscal manager, grant/contract manager, program development staff, Senior LinkAge Line® staff or administrative assistants, they have all been working hard to help ensure that 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.

The dedication of Board and Advisory Council on Aging members, staff, volunteers and partners makes the good work of MNRAAA a reality.

With Thanks,

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.

Look Here, We Need You!



The Minnesota River Area Agency on Aging®, Inc. is seeking interested persons to fill the following three-year term vacancies for the Advisory Councils on Aging (ACA) effective January 1, 2014 :

Southeast ACA (Mankato Office)

- Blue Earth County 60+
- Faribault County 60+
- Nicollet County 60+
- Sibley County 60+
- At Large Any Age*

* At large, any age, vacancy will be filled by an individual, residing or employed in Blue Earth, Brown, Faribault, Le Sueur, Martin, Nicollet, Sibley, Waseca or Watonwan Counties.

Southwest ACA (Slayton Office)

- Rock County 60+

To obtain an application, please contact Erica at erica@rndc.org.

The Minnesota River Area Agency on Aging®, Inc. (MnRAAA) is seeking interested persons to fill a one-year term, at-large vacancy on its Board effective January 1, 2014. Applicants must reside and/or be employed in Big Stone, Chippewa, Lac qui Parle, Swift or Yellow Medicine Counties.

The Board provides governance to the MnRAAA. **Applications are due by Friday, November 8, 2013.**

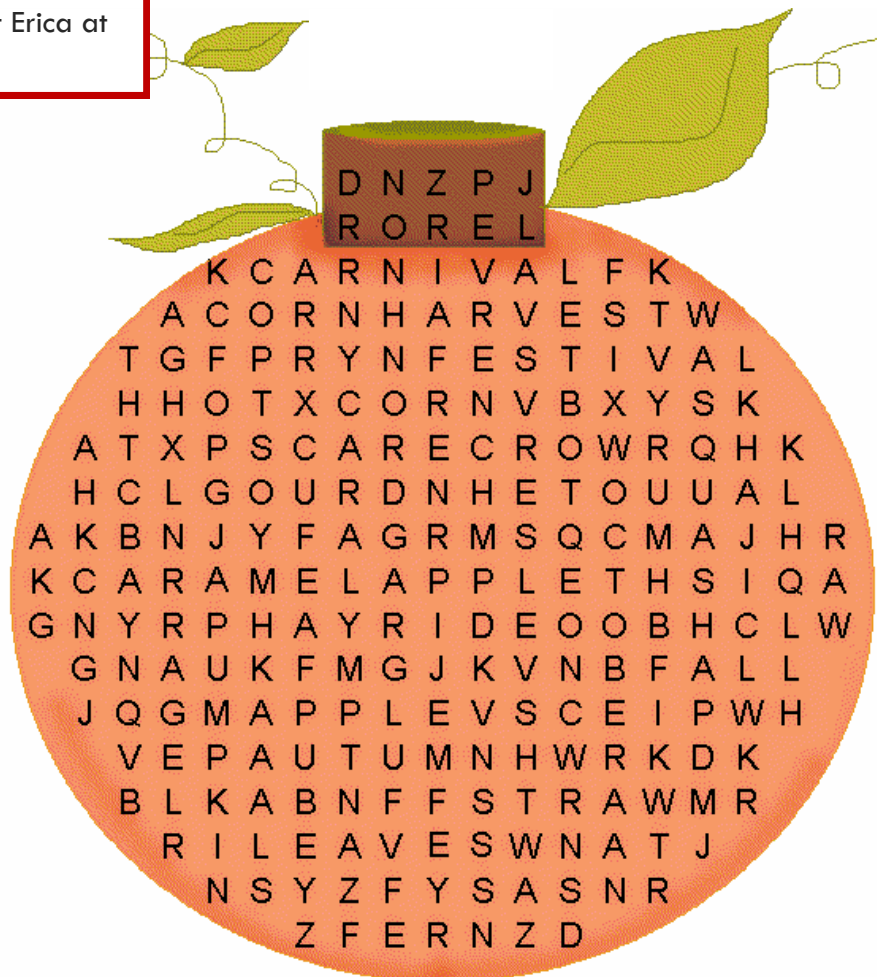
To request an application, or for more information, contact Erica at 507.389.8879 or erica@rndc.org.



MnRAAA Seeks Additional Board Member

Fall Fun Word Search

- | | |
|-----------------|-------------|
| ▪ Acorn | ▪ Gourd |
| ▪ Apple | ▪ Harvest |
| ▪ Autumn | ▪ Hay Ride |
| ▪ Caramel Apple | ▪ Leaves |
| ▪ Carnival | ▪ October |
| ▪ Corn | ▪ Pumpkin |
| ▪ Fall | ▪ Scarecrow |
| ▪ Festival | ▪ Squash |
| | ▪ Straw |



Crime and Older People



Older people and their families worry about crime. Though older people are less likely to be victims of crime than teenagers and young adults, the number of crimes against older

people is hard to ignore. It is often highly publicized. Each year, over two million older people are victims of crime.

Older people are often targets for robbery, purse snatching, pocket picking, car theft, phone scams or home repair scams. They are more likely than younger people to face attackers who are strangers. During a crime, an older person is more likely to be seriously hurt than someone who is younger.

Stay Safe

There are many things you can do to keep you, your money, and your property safe. These do's and don'ts give you a place to start to be safe at home:

- **DO** try to make sure that your locks, doors, and windows are strong and cannot be broken easily. A good alarm system can help.
- **DO** mark valuable property by engraving an

identification number, such as your driver's license number, on it.

- **DO** make a list of expensive belongings. You might even take pictures of the most valuable items. Store these details in a safe place.
- **DON'T** open your door before looking through the peephole or a safe window to see who's there. Ask any stranger to show proof that he or she is who they claim to be. Remember, you don't have to open the door if you feel uneasy.
- **DON'T** keep large amounts of money in the house.

Even though there are risks, don't let a fear of crime stop you from enjoying life. Be careful and be aware of your surroundings. The above tips address areas of concern to older people. These are common sense tips that can help fight crime and protect your safety.



Prevent Falls

Every 15 seconds, an older adult is seen in an Emergency Department for a fall-related injury. Falls are the leading cause of both fatal and nonfatal injuries for those aged 65 and over. The chances of falling and of being seriously injured in a fall increase with age.

Studies show that a combination of interventions can significantly reduce falls among older adults.

Experts recommend:

- A physical activity regimen with

balance, strength training and flexibility components.

- Consulting with a health professional about getting a fall risk assessment.
- Having medications reviewed periodically.
- Getting eyes checked annually.
- Making sure the home environment is safe and supportive.
- New research also suggests hearing loss should be routinely assessed.

In addition, classes such as "Live Well with Chronic Conditions" and "A Matter of Balance" help older adults gain strength, improve balance, and increase confidence to help them live healthier lives and preserve their independence.

For more information on these two classes contact Gail Gilman-Waldner at 507-389-8869 or ggwaldner@rndc.org.



My New Career In Show Business

By Judy Blume, Senior LinkAge Line®

I was recently nominated by Robin Thompson, Senior LinkAge Line® Senior Outreach Coordinator and selected by the Minnesota Board on Aging (MBA) to participate in the Aging Worker Public Awareness Campaign. In a partnership with Twin Cities Public Television (TPT) they will develop short videos in order to share stories of older workers who overcame challenges to find successful employment. The videos will also share messages about what the state and business community need to do to ensure these workers are as successful as possible.

First of all, the terms "aging and older" are all new to me because like those of us 55+ I am still 40 some-thing. However, I have experienced a couple of years of unemployment after my 35 year career as a Human Resource Manager ended suddenly during an economic downturn. It was a difficult time of trying to continue making house payments during a sluggish real estate market and being on the other side of the hiring desk. You would think with my background in HR, I would

have a step up on others in the job market. But, I found I had other challenges to meet such as being over qualified, maybe needing a higher wage, old and set in my ways, out of touch, and not current. All of which were not the case if I would have just had the opportunity to interview. But even with my top notch resume and letter and eager, approachable and lovable personality, I was unable to obtain the dreaded interview.

If I heard anything at all from an employer, it was the infamous rejection letter. I have read the word "no" written in so many different ways that I could write a book. Some of which I had used in the past and others were so gracious I would hope to use in the future, if I could just get a job. I have so much knowledge and could offer so much to an employer; I had been working in high stress jobs with long hours and now what do I do with all my time? But I also found my life was changing in other ways as well. My parents were in their late-80s and I had four young grandchildren that I wanted to

experience as well. So after 10 months I was able to sell my home and move in with my parents (and that is another whole book). By moving to southern Minnesota it narrowed my job search even more. As it turned out the federal and state unemployment extensions got me through until shortly before I turned 62. So as life would have it, I took early retirement in order to have an income.

Then one day I was reading the help wanted ads, as I would do every day, when the words "prefer retired individuals" jumped out at me. What, did I read that correctly? I had to reread the ad several times. It sounded like something I could do; it was temporary and part-time through the fall, which would give me extra income during the holidays. So I applied, got the job and it has worked out great.

Now, I find myself sitting in a make-up chair at Twin Cities Public television getting "powdered"; then being escorted into a huge studio with 20 foot metal vault

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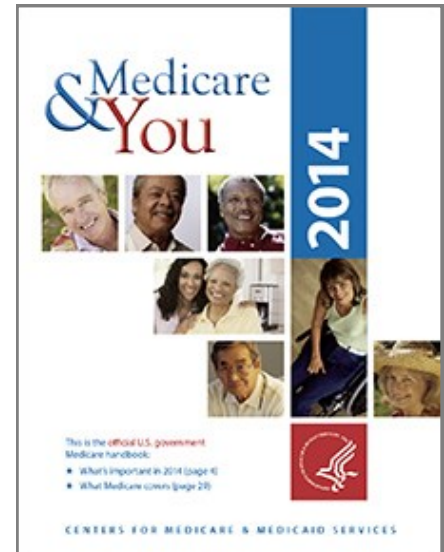
**For MnRAAA Employment and
Volunteer Opportunities
check our website at
www.mnraaa.org**

Ready or Not...

Medicare Open Enrollment is Here!

October 15th through December 7th is the 2014 Medicare Open Enrollment period. Medicare beneficiaries have the opportunity to evaluate their current plan and make changes that will take effect January 1, 2014. There are only a few special circumstances when a person is allowed to make a plan change beyond these dates so it is important to use this time to make the best decision possible for you.

Every year after open enrollment ends, the Senior LinkAge Line® receives calls from people who failed to open their mail and read about their current drug plan changes for the coming year. It isn't until the first bill for the New Year is received, or the beneficiary is charged more at the pharmacy, that they realize their plan has changed. For most of these beneficiaries it is too late to make a change for that year. Since there are so many changes every year, the Senior LinkAge Line® recommends that each person review their options for the next year and open and read every piece of mail received from their plan.



A few reasons to consider a “re-evaluation” of your Part D plan:

- Monthly premiums for each plan will most likely change
- Your medication list may have changed in the last year
- Plan formularies (the list of drugs covered by the plan) may change and the cost sharing may change (amount you pay for the drug under a plan)
- You may be eligible for the “extra help” offered to pay premiums and reduce co-pay amounts (applications are accepted at any time of the year)

Using the official Medicare.gov prescription plan comparison tool, which can be found at www.medicare.gov, allows beneficiaries to view a clear comparison of their current plan with other plans available in 2014. The plan comparison tool will present the cost of the individual's medications in each plan offered in Minnesota. With this knowledge a person can make a sound decision on a drug plan and prepare for the coming year with confidence and peace of mind.

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Show Business continued from Page 4

doors. There was a nice young gentleman trying tactfully to get the microphone under my carefully selected sweater and sound testing my voice. What a different experience for this “older worker”. Then the hour long interview began. They did explain that maybe 30/60 second excerpts will be used for the video clips. Watch for the upcoming videos on the MBA website and TPT for the rest of the story.



Mark Your Calendar!

Give To The Max Day is
November 14, 2013

MNRAAA would appreciate your support! Visit www.mnraaa.org to make your donation today!

Flu + You

Protect. Learn. Understand. Safeguard.

Educating older adults about influenza and prevention

From the National Council on Aging and Sanofi Pasteur

Everyone's immune system typically weakens with age, making it harder for us to fight infection and disease as we get older.

As a result, adults aged 65 and older, even those who are healthy and active, are more vulnerable to influenza (commonly known as the "flu").

To help raise awareness of the seriousness of the flu and the importance of flu prevention, actor and '70s pop culture icon Lee Majors is joining the *Flu + You* campaign.



Today, Majors, who is best known for his role on the iconic television show *The Six Million Dollar Man*, has a new mission: To urge everyone 65 and older to talk to their health care provider about the flu and what can be done to help prevent it, including selection of the most appropriate flu vaccine.

Flu Tips from Lee Majors:

1. **People 65 and older should not wait for flu season to start to get their annual flu shot.** Get vaccinated as soon as possible when vaccine is available because the body's immune system and its ability to fight illness decreases with age, meaning older adults are more vulnerable to the flu and its related complications.
2. **There are a few vaccine options available, and some have been developed for specific stages of life.** In addition to the traditional flu vaccine (which helps protect against three strains of the flu virus), there is a quadrivalent vaccine (which helps protect against four strains), and a higher dose vaccine that is designed specifically for adults aged 65 and older. By improving the production of antibodies in older patients, the higher dose vaccine can provide a stronger immune response to influenza than traditional vaccines.
3. **The flu can be easily passed from person to person, so it's important that those who spend time with older adults, such as family and caregivers, also get vaccinated.** An annual flu shot is a Medicare Part B benefit. This means that the vaccine is covered with no copay for Medicare beneficiaries 65 years of age and older. Talk to your health care provider today about the dangers of the flu, the benefits of annual immunization to help protect against the flu, and the best flu vaccine option to meet your needs.

- Source <http://www.ncoa.org/improve-health/community-education/flu--you/#sthash.FRBzb4R6.dpuf>

Open Enrollment Continued from Page 5

Volunteers are available to meet with Medicare beneficiaries to review their 2014 Medicare options. If you would like to schedule a time to meet with a volunteer contact the Senior LinkAge Line® at 1-800-333-2433. The Senior LinkAge Line®: A One Stop Shop for Minnesota Seniors is a free statewide service of the Minnesota Board on Aging and Area Agencies on Aging. Specialists provide one-to-one assistance with helping older adults age well and live well. The Senior LinkAge Line® is the federally-designated State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) for Minnesota and is the place to call for Medicare and health insurance issues.

Call 1-800-333-2433 for assistance Monday through Friday from 8:00am to 4:30pm.

"Courage doesn't always roar. Sometimes courage is the little voice at the end of the day that says I'll try again tomorrow."

— Mary Anne Radmacher

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month.
Remember to do your self exam and remind a friend!

Our Staff

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Return Service Request

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@rmdc.org or 507.389.8879



Our Board

- | | | | |
|--|--|--|---|
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Glenwood | •Caroline Wood
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Worthington |
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