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Dear Readers:

In *The Book of Choices*, Mike Magee, M.D. wrote "As there is change in society, so are there changes in individuals and relationships as well. Change can generate fear and anxiety, but also can ignite our inborn desire to explore, to flow and grow rather than remain the same." And so it is with MnRAAA. On May 30, the Mid-Minnesota Development Commission (MMDC), one of MnRAAA's financial partners and offices, provided official notice of their intent to end their contractual agreement with MnRAAA, effective September 30, 2014.

Earlier this year, MnRAAA initiated a contract with Aurora Consulting to guide us through strategic planning. Following preliminary work, the focus evolved into organization redesign. This was an especially timely evolution because of the need to address the transitions with MMDC. Although a completion date for the redesign process has not been established, plans are underway to ensure that MnRAAA's key roles continue through the transition.

The redesign process will include a number of steps. These steps will help determine: 1) the structure that will best ensure the efficient use of resources in this changing funding environment; and 2) the structure that will best ensure a sustainable organization that will help meet the needs of older adults and caregivers, as well as partners.

At times, the redesign process seems frightening and daunting. It's at these times that I re-read what Carl T. Rowan stated, "We emphasize that we believe in change because we were born of it, we have lived by it, we prospered and grew great by it. So the status quo has never been our god, and we ask no one else to bow down before it."

It is my hope that as MnRAAA goes through the redesign process, we are visionary and open to change; always remembering that MnRAAA's mission is to be *the gateway to resources for older adults, caregivers and service providers in the twenty-seven counties of southwest Minnesota.*

Sincerely,

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 immediately:

### **Northern ACA (Willmar Office)**

- Chippewa County 60+
- Kandiyohi County 60+
- McLeod County 60+
- Swift County 60+

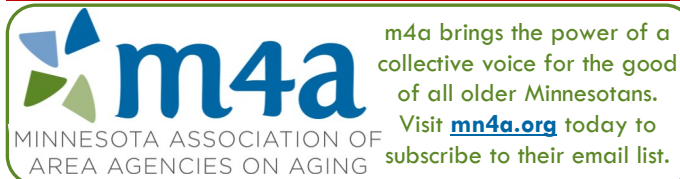
### **Southwest ACA (Slayton Office)**

- Lincoln County 60+

### **Southeast ACA (Mankato Office)**

- Sibley County 60+

To obtain an application, please contact Erica at [erica@rndc.org](mailto:erica@rndc.org).



MNRAAA is seeking interested persons to fill two, three-year term, at-large vacancies on its Board effective immediately.

**Vacancy 1:** individual of minority status who represents the ethnic/racial diversity of south central/western Minnesota. Applicants must reside and/or be employed in Big Stone, Blue Earth, Brown, Chippewa, Cottonwood, Faribault, Jackson, Kandiyohi, Lac qui Parle, Le Sueur, Lincoln, Lyon, Martin, McLeod, Meeker, Murray, Nicollet, Nobles, Pipestone, Redwood, Renville, Rock, Sibley, Swift, Waseca, Watonwan or Yellow Medicine Counties.

**Vacancy 2:** individual who represents the at-large community that resides and/or works in Blue Earth, Brown, Faribault, Le Sueur, Martin, Nicollet, Sibley, Waseca or Watonwan Counties.

The Board provides governance to MNRAAA. To request an application, contact Erica at [erica@rndc.org](mailto:erica@rndc.org). **Applications are due Friday, August 15, 2014.**

## MNRAAA Seeks Additional Board Members

## New Staff Highlights

**Carrie Sharp**, based out of the Mankato office, joined MNRAAA in April as a Senior LinkAge Line® First Contact Client Service Center (SLL CSC) Specialist. Some of her responsibilities include follow-ups, assistance and advocacy for individuals entering a nursing facility and also when returning to the community setting. Carrie ensures appropriate referrals and follow-up are conducted by lead agencies and nursing facilities as well as providing assistance on the MinnesotaHelpNow online chats. Carrie's background includes a degree in Psychology from Southwest Minnesota State University, Marshall. Prior to joining MNRAAA she was a social worker at Mower County Health and Human Services



for 14 years. Carrie lives in Waseca with her husband and son. In her free time she enjoys walking, golfing, landscaping and spending time at the lake.

**Denae Hoffman**, based out of the Mankato office, joined MNRAAA in June as a Pre-Admission Screening (PAS) Specialist. Her degrees are in Human Development & Family Science from North Dakota State University and a Social Work degree from Minot State University. Prior to joining MNRAAA, Denae interned with the English Language Learners department in the Fargo Public Schools and worked at Sanford Health on the Psychiatry unit. In her free time, she likes to hunt, fish, and spend time with family & friends.





## Family Caregiving Affects

Estimates by the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) indicate that more than 30 million American households provide caregiving to family members older than age 50. That

figure is expected to double in the next 25 years.

The impact of family caregiving affects families, businesses and communities, and the social, economic and emotional tolls can be high. It is important that families learn about the many resources available as they develop care teams and adequate caregiving plans that support the individual needing the care, as well as the primary caregiver.

It's very important to make sure the family caregiver stays physically and mentally healthy. Caregivers should seek assistance from other family members, friends, community and/or business resources to provide respite for the caregiver to alleviate some of the stress. Respite should be personalized to meet individual needs of the care recipient and the caregiver. Respite can vary from a few hours a day, per week or up to 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

**To determine the type of respite needed, families can consider the following suggestions:**

- **Talk with the person who needs the care.** What are his/her goals? It's important to listen to the desires of the individual in developing a plan. It is also important to listen to the goals of the primary caregiver, often the spouse or person living nearest to the individual needing support.
- **Determine who's on the team.** As the team forms, specific roles can be matched with personal interests and skills. Is there an accountant in the family? Maybe that person prefers managing the bill

paying rather than providing personal care, or maybe the reverse.

- **Determine what needs are present.** It's important to provide care only for those areas that the individual needs help with. Independence is vital to health and well-being, so look for skills and abilities that the individual is capable of doing and desires to do. It is also good to be aware of what skills and abilities are likely to diminish due to physical changes or conditions related to health diagnoses.
- **Create an action plan.** There are many ways that families and friends can support the individual and the primary caregiver. Be specific. Don't just offer to help. Offer to run an errand, make supper one night a week, take the individual to a movie, give an hour or two so that the caregiver can go to their bowling night.



- **Determine when to seek additional support services.**

Companion care or chore services may be just the help that is needed to keep the individual at home. Such support services can fill the gaps for the family caregiving team in areas like transportation, respite care, house-keeping, meal planning and preparation and errands.

Overnight companion care may give the primary caregiver the feeling of security that allows for a good night's sleep.

**Following are some suggestions for primary caregivers:**

- **Think of caregiving as a job.** You deserve to take breaks and request time off so you can be refreshed.
- **Stay healthy and take care of yourself.** Take time to eat a balanced diet, exercise your body and mind, take care to learn and use proper back care techniques, and get enough rest.



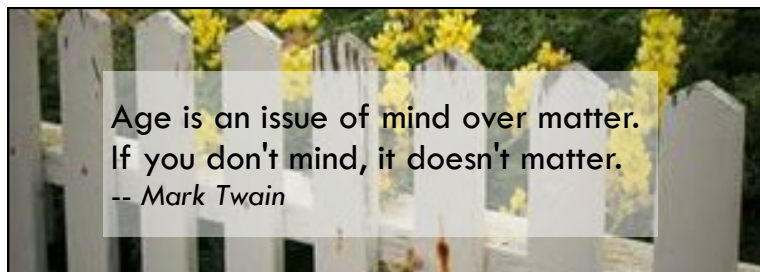
## Take Action Become a Community for a Lifetime



Minnesota's population is aging. By 2020 there will be more people over age 60 than children in school. By 2030 1 in 4 people will be over the age of 65. This phenomenon is commonly characterized as "The Age Wave" because the population not only ages but also lives longer.

Communities throughout Minnesota can prepare for this demographic shift through intentional planning initiatives referred to as "communities for a lifetime." Cities and their local leaders are critical in setting a vision for age-friendly communities and creating effective policies, planning initiatives and citizen engagement opportunities. Municipalities are uniquely positioned to influence a wide spectrum of community domains such as: Public Safety; Government; Parks & Rec; Planning; and Development.

MNRAAA staff are available to help you learn about the significant, unique challenges and opportunities of an aging population. For more information contact Gail at 507.389.8869. ■



Age is an issue of mind over matter.  
If you don't mind, it doesn't matter.  
-- Mark Twain

## MINNESOTA STATE FAIR

### Fun Facts

- Theodore "Teddy" Roosevelt delivered the famous "Speak Softly and Carry a Big Stick" speech at the Minnesota State Fair in 1901. Later known as the "Big Stick Policy", it was a foreign policy that advocated the use of caution and diplomacy, backed by the use of power if needed.
- The very first state fair was in 1859, the year after Minnesota was granted statehood.
- Legendary pacer horse, Dan Patch, set the world record for one-mile at the Grandstand in 1906; the record stood for more than 30 years.
- John Phillip Souza composed the "Minnesota March" and performed it at the Minnesota State Fair in 1927.
- F. Scott Fitzgerald wrote about the Minnesota State Fair in his 1928 book titled "A Night at the Fair".

Source: [www.minnesotafunfacts.com](http://www.minnesotafunfacts.com)

### Save the Date!



Naomi Feil

The Chesley Center on Aging is excited to announce Naomi Feil, an internationally known speaker, will be coming to Mankato September 4, 2014. Naomi is the founder of the

Validation Training Institute, Inc. and developer of Validation Therapy for use with persons suffering from dementia. Caregivers will learn the tools they need to provide care to people with dementia through validation, dignity and respect.

This day long event will be held at the Verizon Wireless Civic Center, Mankato. Visit [www.mnsu.edu/chesleycenter](http://www.mnsu.edu/chesleycenter) for additional information.

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- **Participate in on-the-job education.** Find out what you can about your loved one's diagnoses and conditions. Explore the Internet and other sources for information on technological advances and treatment options. Discuss these matters with your family team and your health care team of professionals.
  - **Accept your limits and simplify.** Organize areas of need into categories. Ask for help from the family team to address specific tasks. Eliminate areas that are no longer priorities.
  - **Advocate for your own rights and needs.** You have the right to your own dreams and goals and to seek support from family, friends and other caregivers.
- Family caregiving doesn't have to be a lonely experience. With planning, it can be a great opportunity for families and friends to gather together to do what they can to support one another. Families are encouraged to begin talking about the caregiving needs early and often. ■

## 4 Types of Exercise Maximize the Benefits

It's important to vary your exercise program to prevent boredom and to get the benefit of different types of activities. Be creative. Regularly include endurance, strength, balance and flexibility exercises in your routine.

**Endurance:** Endurance exercises increase your breathing and heart rate and help improve your overall health and fitness. Brisk walking, swimming and hiking are excellent endurance activities. Activities such as these can make daily activities, such as mowing the lawn or climbing stairs, easier. They also can help you:

- Keep up with your grandchildren during a trip to the park
- Dance to your favorite songs at the next family wedding
- Rake the yard and bag up the leaves

**Strength:** Strength, or resistance, exercises increase muscle strength. You can use weights or resistance bands for these exercises. Even small improvements in muscle strength can make a big difference in your ability to perform everyday tasks. Strength training also will make it easier to:

- Lift your carry-on bag into the overhead bin of the airplane
- Carry groceries in from the car
- Pick up bags of mulch in the garden



**Balance:** Balance exercises can help prevent falls, a common problem in older adults. Some lower-body strength exercises can also help improve your balance. Tai Chi is another example of a balance exercise. Balance exercises can help you:

- Turn around quickly when you're walking and hear a bicycle bell behind you
- Walk along a gravel path without losing your balance
- Stand on tiptoe to reach something on a top shelf

**Flexibility:** Stretching can help your body stay flexible and limber, giving you freedom of movement that helps with your regular daily activities. Yoga is a great example of a flexibility exercise. Flexibility exercises make it easier to:

- Bend down to tie your shoes
- Look over your shoulder as you back out of the driveway
- Stretch to clean hard-to-reach areas of the house



If you would like to learn more about the four types of exercise to maximize the benefits enroll in "A Matter of Balance" class. For more information contact Gail at 507-389-8869. ■

### Health and Fitness Fast Facts



Weight training can also release endorphins, which also help you moderate your appetite.

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Staff Highlight Con't. Page 2

**Pam Mailander**, based out of the Slayton office, joined MNRAAA in May as Contact Center Coordinator/Return to Community Specialist. Call Center Coordinator responsibilities include supervision of staff and programs that make up the Contact Center, including the SLL, Return to Community and the Client Services Center. As a Return to Community Specialist, Pam's primary responsibility is providing follow-up assistance and advocacy to older adults, persons with disabilities and their caregivers who relocate home from a long term care facility. Pam is a Registered Nurse and her background includes working in long term care, assisted living settings and hospice. Pam enjoys reading, bicycling, baking and spending time with family and friends.



**Kristen Mullen**, based out of the Mankato office, joined MNRAAA in April as a Pre-Admission Screening (PAS) Specialist. Some of her responsibilities include conducting pre-admission screenings for individuals entering a nursing facility and follow-up on individuals returning to the community. Kristen graduated from MN State University Mankato with a

Bachelor of Science degree in Social Work.

Previous work experience includes working as a case manager at Sibley County, social worker at Oaklawn Health Care Center and program manager at ELM Homes. In her free time, Kristen enjoys spending time with her family, running, reading and enjoying the outdoors. Kristen lives in North Mankato with her husband and daughter.



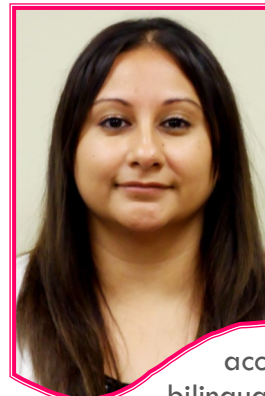
**Brianna Schmitt**, based out of the Mankato office, joined MNRAAA in May of 2014 as an Administrative Assistant for the Pre-Admission Screening staff. Brianna graduated from South Central College in December of 2013 with an AAS Administrative Assistant degree.

She moved to Mankato two years ago from Dawson, MN. In Brianna's free time she enjoys spending time with family and friends.



**Debbie Bauleke**, based out of the Mankato office, joined MNRAAA in June as the Senior Outreach Specialist. She has worked as a social worker for seventeen years. In her past experience she worked as the Director of Social Services in skilled nursing facilities, for a home care agency and as a

Community Living Specialist for the Return to Community Initiative. Debbie lives in rural Le Sueur with her husband Bob. They have three adult children and are the proud grandparents of Stella, Evan, Isabel and Vivian. In her spare time Debbie enjoys playing with her grandchildren, walking, flower and vegetable gardening, reading and biking.



**Perla Cardona**, based out of the Mankato office, joined MNRAAA in June as an Administrative Assistant. Her education is in Business Management and Administration. Perla comes to MNRAAA with experience in the community health setting where she provided customer service and accounts receivable. Perla is

bilingual in Spanish and English. Through her past experiences, Perla was exposed to many afflictions that clients face and since then it has been a goal of hers to always put people first by guiding and informing them of the resources available.

**Welcome to the MNRAAA Team ladies! ■**



# Our Staff

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Denae Hoffman, Pre-Admission Screening Specialist <a href="mailto:denae@rmdc.org">denae@rmdc.org</a>	1.800.333.2433 x: 82036	Kaylee Kamm, First Contact Client Service Center Specialist <a href="mailto:kaylee@rmdc.org">kaylee@rmdc.org</a>	1.800.333.2433 x: 82021
Sherry Orth, Pre-Admission Screening Quality Assurance Lead <a href="mailto:sherry@rmdc.org">sherry@rmdc.org</a>	1.800.333.2433 x: 82003	Carrie Sharp, First Contact Client Service Center Specialist <a href="mailto:carrie@rmdc.org">carrie@rmdc.org</a>	1.800.333.2433 x: 82009
Debbie Bauleke, Senior Outreach Specialist <a href="mailto:debbie@rmdc.org">debbie@rmdc.org</a>	1.800.333.2433 x: 82028	Perla Cardona, Administrative Assistant <a href="mailto:perla@rmdc.org">perla@rmdc.org</a>	507.389.8864

## Slayton Office:

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Robin Weis, Aging Program Director <a href="mailto:rlinkage@swrdc.org">rlinkage@swrdc.org</a>	507.836.1642	Gail Radke, Contact Cntr. Coordinator/Sr. Outreach Specialist <a href="mailto:gailr@swrdc.org">gailr@swrdc.org</a>	1.800.333.2433 x: 82006
Linda Tobias, Client Services Center <a href="mailto:lindat@swrdc.org">lindat@swrdc.org</a>	1.800.333.2433 x: 82012	Julie Stewart, Information & Assistance Specialist <a href="mailto:julies@swrdc.org">julies@swrdc.org</a>	1.800.333.2433 x: 82008
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Kylie Chandler, Client Services Center/Return to Community <a href="mailto:kyliec@swrdc.org">kyliec@swrdc.org</a>	1.800.333.2433 x: 82018	Brittany Perish, Return to Community <a href="mailto:brittany@swrdc.org">brittany@swrdc.org</a>	1.800.333.2433 x: 82019
Katie Gillette, Information & Assistance Specialist <a href="mailto:katrina@swrdc.org">katrina@swrdc.org</a>	1.800.333.2433 x: 82022	Pam Mailander, Contact Center Coordinator <a href="mailto:pamelam@swrdc.org">pamelam@swrdc.org</a>	1.800.333.2433 x: 82245

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

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Mankato MN 56002-3323

*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](mailto:erica@rmdc.org) or 507.389.8879



**Our Board**

- |  |  |   |   |
|--|--|---|---|
| •DuWayne Underthun, <i>Chair</i><br>Willmar              | •Amy Wilde<br>Dassel                           | •Bob Roesler<br>Sherburn                    | •Rose Schlieman<br>Holloway                           |
| •Maureen Melgaard-Schneider, <i>Secretary</i><br>Atwater | •Michael Pattee, <i>Treasurer</i><br>Glenwood  | •Drew Campbell, <i>Alternate</i><br>Mankato | •Rosie Rogers<br>Worthington                          |
| •Susan Meyer<br>Olivia                                   | •James Broich, <i>Vice Chair</i><br>Sleepy Eye | •Sharon Hollatz<br>Redwood Falls            | •Marvin Tinklenberg<br>Edgerton                       |
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