



MINNESOTA RIVER AREA AGENCY ON AGING®, INC.

# MNRAAA NEWS

## In This Volume:

- White House Conference on Aging
- ACA & MnRAAA Board Vacancy
- Ebola Information
- Live Well at Home Mobile App
- Caregiver Corner
- New Staff Highlights
- Communities for a Lifetime
- Staying Safe During Exercise
- New Board Member
- Medicare Open Enrollment
- Medicare Cost Sharing
- MnRAAA Staff & Board



Volume V, Issue IV ♦ 10.27.14

Dear Readers,

In the August issue of *MnRAAA News* I wrote about the redesign process we are undertaking. Since that time, the board unanimously voted to transition MnRAAA from the current practice of contracting with regional development commissions for staff to work on behalf of MnRAAA, to MnRAAA becoming the employer. This will be a great opportunity to develop an even more dynamic and effective organization that will serve our diverse service area. The core services we provide (administration, program development and information and assistance) will remain the same, as will our delivery of services to older adults and caregivers.

I am excited that our board of directors will expand and diversify and that staff who currently work on behalf of MnRAAA will be offered to become MnRAAA employees. We want to retain the talented and dedicated individuals who have been working in the field of aging for many, many years.

It is anticipated the transition will take from twelve to eighteen months, so I will continue to provide transition updates in future issues of *MnRAAA News*.

I am excited about the upcoming changes and look forward to leading the change process. Thank you in advance for your continued support of the Minnesota River Area Agency on Aging®!

With Thanks,

*Linda Giersdorf*

## 2015 WHITE HOUSE CONFERENCE on AGING

The White House has held a Conference on Aging each decade since the 1960s to identify and advance actions to improve the quality of life of older Americans.

In the past, conference processes were determined by statute with the form and structure directed by Congress through legislation, as part of the authorization of the Older Americans Act.

At this point in time, Congress has not reauthorized the Older Americans Act, and the pending bill does not include a statutory requirement or framework for the Conference.

However, the White House is committed to convening the 2015 conference and will

*Continues on Page 4*

## 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!

MnRAAA is seeking interested persons to fill the following vacancies for the Advisory Council on Aging (ACA):

### Southeast ACA (Mankato Office)

- Brown County 60+      ▪ County Social Services
- Le Sueur County 60+    ▪ Nursing Home Rep.
- Sibley County 60+      ▪ Public/Private Agency

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



**Minnesota Department of Health**  
PROTECTING, MAINTAINING AND IMPROVING THE HEALTH OF ALL MINNESOTANS

For the latest Ebola updates, fact sheets, frequently asked questions, and health care provider resources, please visit the Minnesota Department of Health website at:

[www.health.state.mn.us/ebola](http://www.health.state.mn.us/ebola).

MnRAAA is seeking interested persons to fill a minority representative vacancy on its Board effective immediately. Applicants must reside and/or be employed in the 27 county service area.

The Board provides governance to MnRAAA. **Applications are due by Friday, November 14, 2014.**

To request an application, or for more information, contact Erica at 507.389.8879 or [erica@rndc.org](mailto:erica@rndc.org).




## MnRAAA Seeks Additional Board Member

## Mobile App



Take the quiz and *find your way* to living independently at home.

 **Take Quiz**

 About Quiz     Learn More

## Live Well at Home Mobile App Receives National Award

A mobile app developed for the Minnesota Board on Aging's Live Well at Home initiative with support from the Minnesota Department of Human Services recently received a merit award in the 23<sup>rd</sup> annual National Mature Media Awards Program.

The app, available at no cost through the Apple Store and Google Play, features a seven-question quiz to help users identify their own risks or another's risk for moving permanently from their home. The app is designed to support older Minnesotans to live successfully at home by increasing awareness of risk factors.

The app poses questions about such issues as need for help with everyday tasks, availability of family members and friends to help, whether the person lives alone, memory concerns and whether the person is considering a move to assisted living or a nursing home to get more help.

"Using the Live Well at Home app and answering the quiz is a gateway to a wealth of information and tools on the Live Well at Home website," said Jean Wood, executive director of the Minnesota Board on Aging. "We are pleased to receive national recognition for this part of our effort to help Minnesotans plan to stay at home as they age, if they wish and if possible."

Continues on Page 5





# National Family Caregiver Month

*Family caregivers are recognized for their contributions.*

November is *National Family Caregiver Month*. Over 500,000 Minnesotans care for older adults, doing everything from shopping to bathing to driving to medical

appointments. Families, friends and neighbors provide 91%+ of all long-term care needed by older adults. National Family Caregiver Month is a time to honor and recognize the many family and friends in our communities who care for older adults.

The estimated value of family caregiving provided to older adults in Minnesota is over \$4.58 billion per

year. For every 1% decline in the proportion of care provided by families, the cost to the state of Minnesota rises \$30 million per year. According to the *Minnesota Board on Aging*, supporting and expanding this valuable resource is a critical public investment.

Since many family caregivers don't recognize themselves as a caregiver, they often don't seek services that are available to help them care for their family member and for themselves. Education, training and respite programs for caregivers are available to assist them. The goal is to help family caregivers strengthen their ability to advocate for, manage and coordinate care, while maintaining personal goals and a level of wellness for themselves. ■

## New Staff Highlights



**Jacque Portz**, based out of the Slayton office, joined MNRAAA in October as a Community Living Specialist. She is a RN from Fairmont, MN where she lives with her husband Jeff. They have two sons, Justin and Jacob. Justin will be getting married next summer and Jacob is in his second year at SDSU in Brookings, SD. Jacque enjoys reading, walking and Harley rides with her husband. Most recently she worked as a Public Health Nurse/Care Coordinator with Human Services. Jacque has also served as an Executive Director for an Assisted Living facility and provided patient education related to anticoagulation therapy for individuals on blood thinners.



**Rita Pryan**, based out of the Slayton office, joined MNRAAA in October as a Community Living Specialist. Like Jacque, Rita is also a RN. She resides in Springfield, MN with her husband Blaine. They have an 8 year old Shiatsu named Oscar. She worked several years as a Home Care RN Supervisor. Prior to that she worked as a Charge Nurse in a Long Term Care facility. She was an instructor for CNA classes and provided private nursing for a home care client. In Rita's spare time she enjoys cooking, baking, reading and spending time with her family. ■

## Communities for a Lifetime

**Livable communities** are vibrant intergenerational places where it is easy to get from place to place. They include affordable, appropriate housing options, supportive community features and services, and adequate mobility options. They foster independence, engage residents in civic and social life, and allow older adults to age in place. Done well, they create tremendous economic value in towns and cities, promote healthy living and support environmental sustainability.

MNRAAA has resources available and can offer staff assistance to develop Communities for a Lifetime. For more information contact Gail at 507-389-8869 or [ggwaldner@rncd.org](mailto:ggwaldner@rncd.org). ■

# Staying Safe

## During Exercise & Physical Activity

There's a way for almost every older adult to exercise safely and get meaningful benefits.

### To play it safe and reduce your risk of injury:

- Begin your exercise program slowly with low-intensity exercises.
- Wear appropriate shoes for your activity.
- Warm up before exercising, and cool down afterwards.
- Pay attention to surroundings when exercising outdoors.
- Drink water before, during and after your workout session, even if you don't feel thirsty.
- Dress appropriately for outdoor temperatures or opt for an indoor activity if it's very hot or cold.
- If you have specific health conditions, discuss your exercise and physical activity plan with your health care provider.



MNRAAA offers two evidence-based classes “A Matter of Balance” and “Live Well with Chronic Conditions” that help prevent falls and manage chronic conditions. For more information or to enroll in classes contact Gail at 507-389-8869 or [ggwaldner@rnc.org](mailto:ggwaldner@rnc.org). ■



Election day is almost here, don't forget to get out and vote on Tuesday, November 4. If you're unsure where to vote or need to request an absentee ballot, visit:

<http://pollfinder.sos.state.mn.us/>

Voting is your legal right and responsibility!

White House Continued Page 1

seek broad public engagement and work closely with stakeholders in the lead-up to the conference. Plans are to use web tools and social media to encourage as many older Americans as possible to participate.

The White House Conference on Aging website [www.WhiteHouseConferenceOnAging.gov](http://www.WhiteHouseConferenceOnAging.gov) provides regular updates on Conference activities. The website also provides opportunities for older Americans and leaders in the field of aging to provide their input and personal stories.

Stay tuned for information specific to Minnesota activities. ■

## New Board Member

Lisa Lange is a RN and has been the Executive Director of Temperance Lake Ridge assisted living and memory care, located in Sherburn, MN for nine years. As a child, her grandfather lived with her family. He had Alzheimer's disease and her mother was his main caregiver. She was very close to her grandfather and has very fond memories of sitting on the porch in a rocking chair on his lap listening to all the stories he had to share. Because of her grandfather, she knew at a young age that she wanted to go into geriatric nursing.

Lisa has worked in geriatrics for over twenty-five years. She has a passion to work with those who have dementia and she has special training from the Alzheimer's Association. She has developed Alzheimer's programming for sixteen memory care assisted living facilities.

Lisa and her husband, Kevin, have three children and are very active in the community. They bring their reading passion to the community. They donate and read books to the kids at school and also to the residents at Temperance Lake Ridge.

Lisa developed Martin County's first Alzheimer's Memory Walk, was a writer on the subject of dementia for the Sentinel newspaper, owned and ran Caring Partners Adult Day Care for four years before selling it to Lakeview Methodist Health Care Center in Fairmont, established the Martin and Faribault County Yellow Ribbon Suicide Prevention Chapter and serves as president of the board. She is also a member of the Fairmont and Sherburn Chamber of Commerce, Kinship and Mentor Kids and teaches Sunday School. ■



## Ready or Not...

# Medicare Open Enrollment is Here!

October 15 thru December 7 is the 2015 Medicare Open Enrollment period. Medicare beneficiaries have the opportunity to evaluate their current plan and make changes that will take effect January 1, 2015. 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.

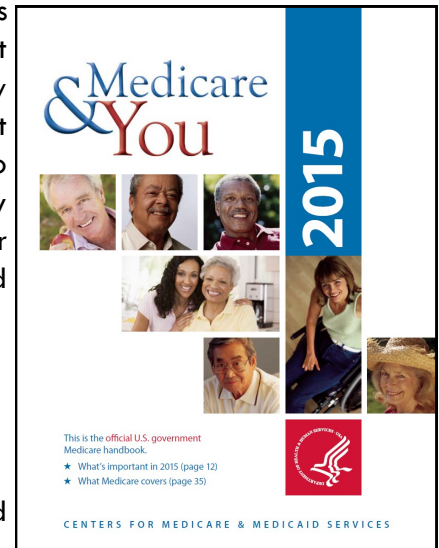
Every year after open enrollment ends, the Senior LinkAge Line® receives calls from people who failed to open their mail and read about their current drug plan changes for the coming year. It isn't until the first bill for the new year is received, or the beneficiary is charged more at the pharmacy, 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](http://www.medicare.gov), allows beneficiaries to view a clear comparison of their current plan with other plans available in 2015. 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.

Volunteers are available to meet with Medicare beneficiaries to review their 2015 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. ■





## Mark Your Calendar!

Give To The Max Day is  
November 13, 2014

MNRAAA would appreciate your support! Visit  
[www.mnraaa.org](http://www.mnraaa.org) to make your donation today!

LWAH App Continued Page 2

The National Mature Media Awards Program recognizes the nation's best marketing, communications, educational materials and programs designed and produced for older adults. It is presented by Mature Market Resource Center, a national clearinghouse for the older adult market. ■

# Medicare Cost Sharing for 2015

## MEDICARE PART A COST SHARING 2015

- Hospital
  - Deductible - \$1,260 for each benefit period
  - Coinsurance:
    - ~ \$0 for the first 60 days of each benefit period
    - ~ \$315 a day for 61<sup>st</sup> – 90<sup>th</sup> days each benefit period
    - ~ \$630 a day for 91<sup>st</sup> – 150<sup>th</sup> days are lifetime reserve days. These 60 days can only be used once during a beneficiary's lifetime
- Skilled Nursing Facility
  - Coinsurance:
    - ~ \$157.50 a day for 21<sup>st</sup> – 100<sup>th</sup> day each benefit period
- Part A Premium (for voluntary enrollees who do not receive premium free Part A)
  - With 30-39 quarters of Social Security coverage: \$224 per month
  - With 29 or fewer quarters of Social Security coverage: \$407 per month

## MEDICARE PART B MEDICAL PREMIUMS 2015

- Monthly - \$104.90
  - Same as 2014
  - Beneficiaries with incomes above \$85,000 for a single and \$170,000 for a couple will continue to pay higher income-adjusted premiums

## MEDICARE PART B DEDUCTIBLE 2015

- Annual - \$147
  - Same as 2014

Call the Senior LinkAge Line®: A One Stop Shop for Minnesota Seniors at 1-800-333-2433 or visit [www.minnesotaHelp.info](http://www.minnesotaHelp.info)® for more information on how we can help. The Senior LinkAge Line® is a free service of the Minnesota Board on Aging and Area Agencies on Aging. ■



The report "Raising Expectations 2014: A State Scorecard on Long-Term Services and Supports for Older Adults, People with Physical Disabilities, and Family Caregivers" is from AARP, The Commonwealth Fund and The Scan Foundation. It takes a multi-dimensional approach to

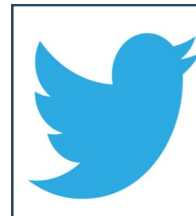


MINNESOTA ASSOCIATION OF  
AREA AGENCIES ON AGING

measure state-level performance of long-term services and supports (LTSS) systems that assist older people, adults with disabilities, and family caregivers. Download the Minnesota fact

sheet at <http://mn4a.org/minnesota-long-term-services/>. ■

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# Our Staff

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## Mankato Office:

10 Civic Center Plaza, Suite 3 • PO Box 3323  
Mankato, MN 56002

**Ph:** 507.389.8879 • **Fx:** 507.387.7105 • **Hrs:** 8 AM - 4:30 PM, M-F

Linda Giersdorf, Executive Director <a href="mailto:lindag@rndc.org">lindag@rndc.org</a>	507.389.8866	Gail Gilman-Waldner, Program Developer <a href="mailto:ggwaldner@rndc.org">ggwaldner@rndc.org</a>	507.389.8869
Rhonda Hiller Fjeldberg, Grant/Contract Manager <a href="mailto:rhonda@rndc.org">rhonda@rndc.org</a>	507.389.8862	Elaine Spain, Program Developer <a href="mailto:espain@rndc.org">espain@rndc.org</a>	507.389.8860
Erica Schott, Project/IT Coordinator <a href="mailto:erica@rndc.org">erica@rndc.org</a>	507.389.8879	Kristin Mullen, Pre-Admission Screening Specialist <a href="mailto:kristen@rndc.org">kristen@rndc.org</a>	1.800.333.2433 x: 82015
Robin Thompson, Senior Outreach Coordinator <a href="mailto:robint@rndc.org">robint@rndc.org</a>	1.800.333.2433 x: 82016	Joyce Prahm, Fiscal Manager <a href="mailto:joyce@rndc.org">joyce@rndc.org</a>	507.389.8894
Sarah Reiman, Volunteer Coordinator <a href="mailto:sarahr@rndc.org">sarahr@rndc.org</a>	1.800.333.2433 x: 82026	Judy Blume, Senior LinkAge Line® Administrative Assistant <a href="mailto:jblume@rndc.org">jblume@rndc.org</a>	1.800.333.2433 x: 82005
Brianna Schmitt, Pre-Admission Screening Administrative Assistant <a href="mailto:brianna@rndc.org">brianna@rndc.org</a>	1.800.333.2433 x: 82031	Denise Rahn, Pre-Admission Screening Specialist <a href="mailto:denise@rndc.org">denise@rndc.org</a>	1.800.333.2433 x: 82023
Denae Hoffman, Pre-Admission Screening Specialist <a href="mailto:denae@rndc.org">denae@rndc.org</a>	1.800.333.2433 x: 82036	Kaylee Kamm, First Contact Client Services Center Specialist <a href="mailto:kaylee@rndc.org">kaylee@rndc.org</a>	1.800.333.2433 x: 82021
Sherry Orth, Pre-Admission Screening Quality Assurance Lead <a href="mailto:sherry@rndc.org">sherry@rndc.org</a>	1.800.333.2433 x: 82003	Carrie Sharp, First Contact Client Services Center Specialist <a href="mailto:carrie@rndc.org">carrie@rndc.org</a>	1.800.333.2433 x: 82009
Debbie Bauleke, Senior Outreach Specialist <a href="mailto:debbie@rndc.org">debbie@rndc.org</a>	1.800.333.2433 x: 82028	Perla Cardona, Administrative Assistant <a href="mailto:perla@rndc.org">perla@rndc.org</a>	507.389.8864

---

## Slayton Office:

2401 Broadway Ave., Suite 2 • Slayton, MN 56172

**Ph:** 507.836.8547 • **Fx:** 507.836.8866 • **Hrs:** 8 AM - 4:30 PM, M-F

Robin Weis, Aging Program Director <a href="mailto:srlinkage@swrdc.org">srlinkage@swrdc.org</a>	507.836.1642	Gail Radke, Senior 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
Nicole Konz, Client Services Center/Return to Community <a href="mailto:nicole@swrdc.org">nicole@swrdc.org</a>	1.800.333.2433 x: 82020	Jasmine Bray, Information & Assistance Specialist <a href="mailto:jasminel@swrdc.org">jasminel@swrdc.org</a>	1.800.333.2433 x: 82025
Jen Pieske, Information & Assistance Specialist <a href="mailto:jenniferp@swrdc.org">jenniferp@swrdc.org</a>	1.800.333.2433 x: 82011	Rhonda Wynia, Office Manager <a href="mailto:rwynia@swrdc.org">rwynia@swrdc.org</a>	507.836.8547 x: 1644
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, Client Services Cntr./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
Jacqueline Portz, Community Living Specialist <a href="mailto:Jacquep@swrdc.org">Jacquep@swrdc.org</a>	1.800.333.2433	Rita Pyan, Community Living Specialist <a href="mailto:ritap@swrdc.org">ritap@swrdc.org</a>	1.800.333.2433

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

PO Box 3323  
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**

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