



# Minnesota River Area Agency on Aging®, Inc.

# MnRAAA NEWS

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## Mark Your Calendars:

- November 11 - Office Closed
- November 26 & 27 - Office Closed
- December 25 - Office Closed
- December 24 - Office closes at Noon

## Transition

In the October 2014 edition of MnRAAA News, I reported that the MnRAAA Board had voted to transition MnRAAA from their current practice of contracting for staff to an agency that will be the employer of staff. One year later I am pleased to report that the transition is going well and is on track to meet the implementation date of January 1, 2016. I am also pleased to announce that all staff currently working on behalf of MnRAAA through a contractual arrangement, will become MnRAAA employees on January 1, 2016.

With the transition comes many changes. Be sure to watch for an upcoming announcement that will include new staff email addresses. Also, please note our new office locations that will be effective January 1. The Slayton office will be located at 1941 Engebretson Avenue and the Mankato office will be located at 201 North Broad Street, Suite 102. Please stop by next year and check out our new locations!

The work involved in the transition process has been intense and would not have been possible without the work of the MnRAAA Governance Committee and Transition Team. Governance Committee members include Robert Roesler, DuWayne Underthun, Lisa Lange and Maureen Melgaard-Schneider. Transition Team members include Joyce Prahm, Robin Thompson, Erica Schott, Rhonda Hiller Fjeldberg, Pam Mailander and myself. The transition has truly been a team effort.

During the transition, the Governance Committee and Transition Team have maintained their focus on MnRAAA's mission – serving as the gateway to resources for older adults, caregivers and service providers in the twenty-seven counties of southwest Minnesota. We look forward to continuing our mission in 2016 and beyond.

Regards,

**Linda Giersdorf**  
*Executive Director* – MnRAAA  
507.389.8866 • [lindag@rndc.org](mailto:lindag@rndc.org)



## 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.

## Medicare Open Enrollment: 5 Things You Need to Do

Routines help keep us focused, organized and even healthy. However, if your health routine doesn't include preparing for Medicare's Open Enrollment, now's the time to kick start a new healthy habit. If you have a Medicare health or prescription drug plan, Open Enrollment runs October 15 through December 7 and is the time you can make changes to your plan. Even if you're happy with your current coverage, you might find something that's a better fit for your budget or your health needs. If you miss an Open Enrollment deadline, you'll most likely have to wait a full year before you can make changes to your plan. Here are things every Medicare beneficiary can do to get in the Medicare Open Enrollment routine:

1. Review your plan notice. Be sure to read any notices from your Medicare plan about changes for next year, especially your "Annual Notice of Change" letter. Look at your plan's information to make sure your drugs are still covered and your doctors are still in network.
2. Think about what matters most to you. Medicare health and drug plans change each year and so can your health needs. Do you need a new primary care doctor? Does your network include the specialist you want for an upcoming surgery? Is your new medication covered by your current plan? Does another plan offer the same value at a lower cost? Take stock of your health status and determine if you need to make a change.
3. Find out if you qualify for help paying for your Medicare. Learn about programs in your state to help with the costs of Medicare premiums, your Medicare Part A (hospital insurance) and Medicare Part B (medical insurance) deductibles, coinsurance and copayments and Medicare prescription drug coverage costs. You can do this by calling the Senior LinkAge Line® at 1-800-333-2433. 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.
4. Shop for plans that meet your needs and fit your budget. Starting in October, you can use Medicare's plan finder tool at [Medicare.gov/find-a-plan](http://Medicare.gov/find-a-plan) to see what other plans are offered in your area. A new plan may:
  - Cost less
  - Cover your drugs
  - Let you go to the providers you want, like your doctor or pharmacy

needs, then you're done. Remember, during Medicare Open Enrollment, you can decide to stay in Original Medicare or join a Medicare Advantage or Cost Plan. If you're already in a Medicare Advantage Plan, you can switch back to Original Medicare.

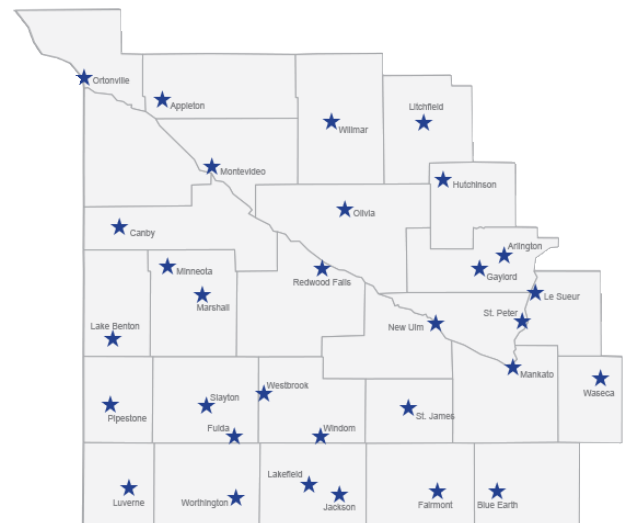
5. Check your plan's star rating before you enroll. The Medicare Plan Finder has been updated with the 2016 Star Ratings for Medicare health and prescription drug plans. Plans are given an overall quality rating on a 1 to 5 star scale, with 1 star representing poor performance and 5 stars representing excellent performance. Use the Star Ratings to compare the quality of health and drug plans being offered.

For more information you can, call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227), and say "Agent." TTY users should call 1-877-486-2048. Help is available 24 hours a day, including weekends.

You can also contact the Senior LinkAge Line® by calling 1-800-333-2433 for assistance Monday through Friday from 8:00am to 4:30pm. Specialists at the Senior LinkAge Line® provide one-to-one assistance with helping older adults age well and live well.

Medicare trained Senior LinkAge Line® volunteers can provide in-person assistance with your questions about 2016 Medicare Open Enrollment, Medicare Health Plans and Part D comparison.

To find a site nearest you, visit our website at:  
[mnraaa.org/programs/medicare-open-enrollment](http://mnraaa.org/programs/medicare-open-enrollment)



If you find that your current coverage still meets your

## Energy Assistance Program



The Energy Assistance Program (EAP) helps pay home heating costs and furnace repairs for income-qualified households. EAP is federally funded through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Grants are:

- Available for renters or homeowners
- For households with income at or below 50 percent of the state median income
- Based on household size, income, fuel type and energy usage

### Services may include:

- Payment of energy bills
- Help with utility disconnections or necessary fuel deliveries
- Education on efficient and safe use of home heating energy
- Advocacy with energy suppliers and human service providers on behalf of consumers

- Repair or replacement of homeowners' malfunctioning heating systems

### How to apply for assistance:

- View the EAP eligibility guidelines to see if you might be eligible (<https://mn.gov/commerce/energy/consumers/Financial-Resources/Energy-Assistance-Program/Eligibility-Guidelines.jsp>);
- Call 1-800-657-3710 to have your local EAP provider send you an application; or
- You can complete an application (<https://mn.gov/commerce/energy/service-providers/For-EAP-Providers/Household-Appl-Forms.jsp>) Applications should be mailed to your local EAP provider. Find the address and phone number of your local EAP provider by viewing the list. (<https://mn.gov/commerce/energy/consumers/Financial-Resources/Energy-Assistance-Program/Energy-Assistance-Providers.jsp>).

### Household Must Apply for EAP by May 31, 2016

Applications must be received or postmarked by May 31, 2016 to be processed for EAP benefits for the 2015-2016 program year. Applications after May 31 may be eligible for the Weatherization Assistance Program, local funds, referrals, advocacy, etc. EAP applications denied due to end of program year will be put on the mailing list to automatically receive an application for the next program year.

[mn.gov/commerce/energy/consumers/Heating-Assistance/](https://mn.gov/commerce/energy/consumers/Heating-Assistance/)

## Training Opportunities

### Powerful Tools for Caregivers

There will be a two-day Leader Training for Powerful Tools for Caregivers on Monday, November 30 and Tuesday, December 1 held in Willmar. The cost is \$180 and includes lunch for both days. To learn more about this event and to download the registration form, visit:

[mnraaa.org/training-opportunities/ptc](http://mnraaa.org/training-opportunities/ptc)

### Caregiver Coaching

There will be a two-day Caregiver Coach Basic Training held on December 17 and 18 in Mankato. The cost is \$60 and includes lunch for both days. To learn more about this event and to download the registration form, visit:

[mnraaa.org/training-opportunities/caregiver-coaching](http://mnraaa.org/training-opportunities/caregiver-coaching)

# Caregiver Corner

## National Family Caregivers Month

November is National Family Caregiver Month. This month we honor and recognize the many people in our communities who care for older adults. Caretakers could be family, friends and even neighbors.

Caregivers provide daily assistance with managing health and personal care needs, while enabling their loved ones to stay in the community longer. Family caregivers are consistently present with their loved ones across all care settings. Since clinics, doctors, nurses and even pharmacists will often change, family caregivers are there as full partners with their loved ones through it all.

- **Most adults would prefer to age in place.** Of adults age 65 and older, 90%\* would prefer to stay in their current home as they age.
- **Almost 40% of adults are family caregivers.** Of all American adults, almost 40% care for a loved one who is sick, disabled, or living with natural ailments consistent with aging.
- **It's more than just basic care.** Almost half of family caregivers perform sophisticated medical/nursing tasks for their loved ones, and up to 70% of caregivers manage medications for their loved ones.
- **Diversity of caregivers.** The percentage of nontraditional caregivers is increasing. The number of men who say they are family caregivers is less than 5% of the number of women caregivers and more than one third of Americans between the ages of 18 and 29 identify themselves as family caregivers.
- **Out-of-pocket caregiving costs.** The average caregiver will spend almost \$5,500 each year to provide care for a loved one. This often times requires families to juggle finances and re-budget. Caregivers often times will also need to make home alterations to ensure safety, security and cleanliness for their loved ones.

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*\*Data acquired from the Caregiver Action Network website ([caregiveraction.org/national-family-caregivers-month](http://caregiveraction.org/national-family-caregivers-month)). The Caregiver Action Network is the nation's leading family caregiver organization working to improve the quality of life for the more than 90 million Americans who care for loved ones with chronic conditions, disabilities, disease, or the frailties of old age.*

If you would like more information on National Family Caregivers Month and the Caregiver Action Network, please visit <http://caregiveraction.org>.

## Flu Season for those 65 years and Older

Adults over the age of 65 are at a greater risk of serious complications from the flu than younger, healthy adults due to decreased immunity that naturally occurs as we age.

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports that 80% - 90% of seasonal flu-related deaths occurred in adults over the age of 65 and 50% - 70% of seasonal flu-related hospitalizations have occurred in the same age group.

Protect yourself this flu season with these simple steps:

- Get your flu shot
- Practice good health habits
- Seek medical advice quickly if you develop flu symptoms

Learn more from the CDC at:  
[cdc.gov/flu/about/disease/65over.htm](http://cdc.gov/flu/about/disease/65over.htm)

# give

## TO THE MAX

# DAY



NOV 12, 2015

## GIVE TO THE MAX DAY 2015

On Thursday, November 12, Minnesotans will have 24 hours to show off their "Minnesota Nice" as they donate online to their favorite nonprofits on Give to the Max Day. Last year, nearly 63,000 Minnesotans gave a record-breaking \$18.3 million in just 24 hours to causes across the state.

Each year, generous supporters celebrate Give to the Max Day by making online donations on GiveMN.org. Your generosity on this day makes a difference far beyond the 24-hour giving event. Please join us on November 12, 2015, for Give to the Max Day and help us continue to change the lives of older adults and their caregivers.

You can donate to MnRAAA at:

[GiveMN.org/organization/Minnesota-River-Area-Agency-On-Aging](http://GiveMN.org/organization/Minnesota-River-Area-Agency-On-Aging)

## MEDICARE OPEN ENROLLMENT

OCTOBER 15, 2015 - DECEMBER 7, 2015

Re-evaluate your plan every year. Many things can change that affect your out-of-pocket costs, such as:

- Your medications or your plan's formulary
- Your plan's provider network, including preferred pharmacies
- Your plan's out-of-pocket costs (premiums, deductibles, coinsurance and copayments)

### Next Steps:

- Go to [medicare.gov](http://medicare.gov) and use the Plan Finder Tool to compare your options
- Call **800-Medicare**
- Call the Senior LinkAge Line® at **800-333-2433**



A One Stop Shop for Minnesota Seniors



We're Moving!

We're getting ready to pack the boxes in December, but before we do, we would like to tell you our new locations. Please update your records.

As of January 1, 2016 you can find us at:

### Mankato Office:

201 North Broad Street  
Suite #102  
Mankato, MN

### Slayton Office:

1941 Engebretson Ave.  
Slayton, MN

### Mailing Address:

PO Box 3323  
Mankato, MN 56002

## 2015-2016 Live Well at Home Grantees

The Minnesota Department of Human Services, through its Aging and Adult Services Division announced the recipients of the 2015-2016 Live Well at Home grants.

The purpose of these grants is to improve the capacity of communities to develop, strengthen, integrate and maintain home and community-based services for individuals age 65 and older, at-risk of long-term nursing home use and/or spending down into Medical Assistance. Grants are intended to stimulate innovation by providing one-time, start-up funds to test new approaches in housing and home and community-based services development, and to develop and support core home and community-based service providers.

- **Aging Services for Communities:** Blue Earth, Brown, Carver, Dakota, Freeborn, Goodhue, Le Sueur, Nicollet, Rice, Scott, Sibley, Steele and Waseca Counties – transportation, respite, homemaker services, \$200,000
- **Atwater Area Help for Seniors:** Kandiyohi and Meeker Counties – caregiver support, homemaker, respite, transportation, chores, companion, service coordination, health promotion, \$52,900
- **Chippewa County-Montevideo Hospital:** Chippewa, Lac qui Parle, Swift and Yellow Medicine Counties – care coordination, caregiver support and health promotion, \$125,222

- **Granite Falls Living at Home Block Nurse Program:** Chippewa and Yellow Medicine Counties – dementia-friendly community development, health promotion and chronic disease, \$102,502
- **Grove City Area Care:** Meeker County – transportation, caregiver support, care coordination, chore, companion, health promotion, \$123,561
- **Interfaith Caregivers Faith in Action in Faribault County:** Faribault, Martin and Watonwan Counties – chore, health promotion, service coordination, caregiver support, companion, homemaker, \$153,645
- **The Lutheran Home Association:** Blue Earth, Brown, Carver, Le Sueur, Nicollet, Scott and Sibley Counties – caregiver support, care coordination, health promotion and chronic disease self-management, \$250,000
- **Paynesville Area Living at Home Block Nurse Program:** Kandiyohi, Meeker and Stearns Counties – transportation, caregiver support, service management, chore, homemaker, companion and health promotion, \$87,642
- **VINE Faith in Action:** Blue Earth, Le Sueur, Nicollet and Watonwan Counties – outreach and service coordination to immigrant and rural elders, \$250,000



MINNESOTA RIVER  
Area Agency on Aging®

## New Look Coming Soon!

Watch for a brand new logo and look for the Minnesota River Area Agency on Aging, Inc.® in the January 2016 issue of MnRAAA News.

## Staff Announcements



We wish to welcome Lincoln JoAnn, daughter of Brittany Perish (Return to Community Specialist) and her husband Brett. She was born September 20 and weighed 7 lb. 8 oz.



Congratulations to Kristen Mullen for her second place finish in the 1/2 Marathon (with a time of 1:30:47) at the Mankato Marathon held on October 18, 2015.

## Southeast Office Staff

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Paula Traphagen-Bossert, LSW, <i>Pre-Admission Screening Specialist</i> .....	paula@rncd.org.....	1.800.333.2433 x: 82037

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## Southwest Office Staff

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

PO Box 3323  
Mankato, MN 56002-3323

*Return Service Requested*

**Your Opinion Matters!**

Please share you 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.



**Marvin Tinklenberg**

Marvin Jacob Tinklenberg was born October 6, 1926 to Sam and Hattie (DeYong) Tinklenberg in Burke Township, south of Woodstock, Minnesota. He attended country school and graduated from Edgerton High School in 1944. Following graduation he entered the United States Army on March 27, 1945, serving during World War II. He was honorably discharged on December 28, 1946 attaining the rank of sergeant and returned back to Edgerton. On February 5, 1948 he was united in marriage to Joyce Roskamp at Runals Memorial Hall. Their union was blessed with two children, Leah and Myron, and 64 years of marriage together. The couple made their home and raised their family in Edgerton.

Marvin was the co-owner and operator of M & H Hardware and Appliance of Edgerton. Upon retirement he began serving Pipestone County as County Commissioner for near 18 years. Joyce died December 20, 2012. Following a brief decline in health, Marvin entered the care of the Royal C. Johnson Veterans Memorial Medical Center in Sioux Falls, South Dakota where he died Sunday, September 27, 2015 at the age of 88 years.

Marvin had served on the Minnesota River Area Agency on Aging, Inc.® Board of Directors since 2012.

**Our Board**

Bob Roesler, <i>Chair</i> .....	Sherburn	Lisa Lange.....	Sherburn
DuWayne Underthun, <i>Vice Chair</i> .....	Willmar	Mary Perry.....	Slayton
Maureen Melgaard-Schneider, <i>Secretary</i> .....	Atwater	Phil Schafer.....	Sherburn
Amy Wilde, <i>Treasurer</i> .....	Dassel	Tom Loveall .....	Winnebago
Rose Schlieman.....	Holloway	Steve Rohlfig, <i>Alternate</i> .....	Madison Lake