

# MINRAAA news



Chore services funded under Title III-B of the Older Americans Act, can include activities such as heavy household tasks, yard work and sidewalk maintenance.



## Minnesota River Area Agency on Aging (MNRAAA)

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## REMINDER

**Medicare Open  
Enrollment  
starts Friday,  
October 15.**

## Legislative Update

I don't know about you, but these special sessions are not special anymore. There's was a lot of action, especially in the month of June from our legislators.

Going into this session, MNRAAA identified three main priorities that were recognized as important:

1. Volunteer Driver (defining what is a volunteer driver and income tax subtraction)
2. Age-Friendly Minnesota
3. Broadband

We are happy to report that all three areas saw significant positive legislative action!

### Volunteer Drivers

We have seen a dramatic decrease in the number of volunteer drivers prior to the pandemic. It was discovered that many were being classified in the insurance world like Uber and Lyft drivers. This drove (pun) their rates up. We were able to clarify the definition as not for-hire. With our partners, we successfully advocated in creating a state income tax subtraction which will reduce their tax liability.

### Age Friendly

In 2019, Governor Walz signed an executive order to put together an Age-Friendly Council. This legislative session, they extended the Council to run through June 30, 2024, and funded two grants under this council for fiscal years 2023 and 2024.

### Broadband

MNRAAA partnered with the Minnesota Rural Broadband Coalition to advocate for Border-to-Border Broadband. The legislature passed \$70 million to the grant program to complete broadband across the State of Minnesota. During the pandemic, every Minnesotan found how important it is to have access to broadband at an affordable rate.

MNRAAA is grateful to our partners, coalitions and advocates to have such a positive impact at the legislature this year. Thank you to all of you who assisted in contacting your legislators and raising the voice for older adults and caregivers.

*Jason W. Swanson*







## 2022 Title III Older Americans Act Funding Cycle

*Rhonda Hiller Fjeldberg, Grant and Contract Manager*

MNRAAA is seeking applicants for funding under Title III of the Older Americans Act. Funding is available to develop and/or expand services for older adults (age 60+) and their caregivers in MNRAAA's twenty-seven county service area for the period of January 1, 2022 – December 31, 2022.



Funding categories include Title III-B Supportive Services, Title III-C Nutrition Services, Title III-D Disease Prevention and Health Promotion Services and Title III-E National Family Caregiver Support Program Services. Examples include:

### **Title III-B Supportive Services**

- › Chore
- › Special Access
- › Telephone Reassurance
- › Technology

### **Title III-C Nutrition Services**

- › Congregate and
- › Home Delivered Meals

### **Title III-D Disease Prevention and Health Promotion Services**

- › Evidence-Based Health Promotion Programs such as A Matter of Balance (MOB), Stay Active and Independent for Life (SAIL), and Diabetes Self-

Management Program (DSMP)

### **Title III-E National Family Caregiver Support Program Services**

- › Caregiver Respite
- › Caregiver Counseling
- › Caregiver Training

### **Submission Process and Deadline:**

All grant applications and contract proposals must be submitted via MNRAAA's grant platform. To access the platform for more information such as a complete list of allowable services or to apply, go to [mnraaa.org/grant-opportunities](https://mnraaa.org/grant-opportunities).

The applications/proposals must be submitted by 4:30 p.m., on Wednesday, September 22, 2021, at which time the ability to submit via MNRAAA's grant platform will be closed. Late responses are not accepted.

Older adults and their caregivers are key members of our society, community, and family. The pandemic has taught us that when we work together, we can successfully support and assist those in need. If your organization is interested in continuing to support older adults and their caregivers or in implementing a new service, MNRAAA encourages you to submit a 2022 Title III application. Together, we can assist older adults in maintaining the lifestyle of their choice.

### **Direct Questions to:**

Rhonda Hiller Fjeldberg, LSW,  
Grant and Contract Manager  
[rfjeldberg@mnraaa.org](mailto:rfjeldberg@mnraaa.org)

Responses to questions will be posted on the applicant portal in MNRAAA's grant platform.

MNRAAA will be closed on the following dates:

**ALL STAFF TRAINING & RETREAT**  
Friday, August 13

**LABOR DAY**  
Monday, September 6



## Options for Older Adult Pet Lovers

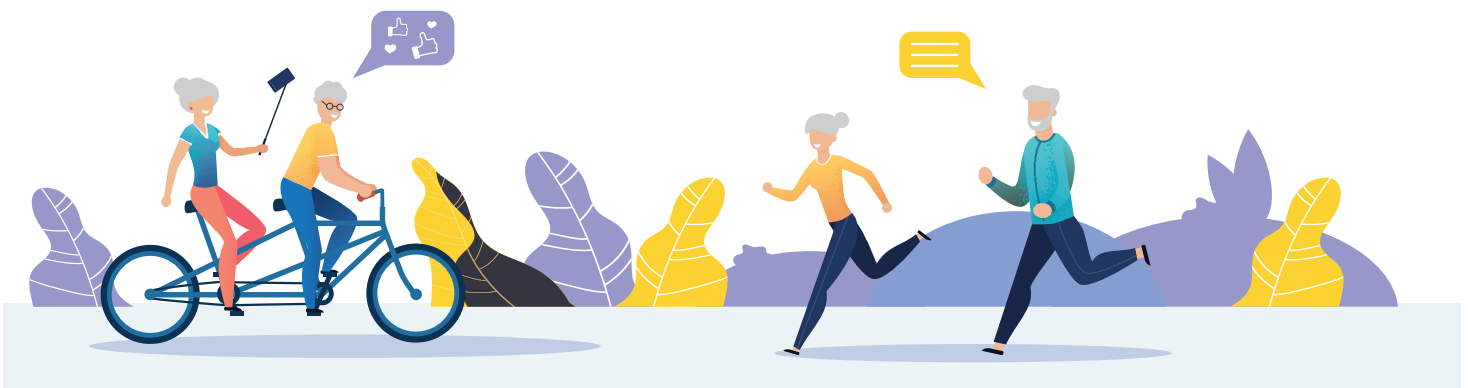
Pets are companions providing connections and happiness to all who meet them. But some older adults may not have the ability to care for a pet any longer or they live in housing that does not allow pets so an animatronic companion pet may be the best fit for them. Companion Pets provide ease-of-care and convenience with the technology to interact like a real pet. Testimonials from those who have had the pleasure of interacting with a Companion Pet say their pet has reduced isolation and loneliness plus allows for fun and play.

The organization A.C.E of Southwest Minnesota has invested in their older adult community by providing Companion Pets to assisted livings and nursing homes to use with their residents. Linda Wenzel, the A.C.E. Rock County Coordinator donated a cat and a dog Companion Pet through the Southwest Dementia Awareness Network group to facilities in Luverne including Poplar Creek, The Oaks, Good Samaritan, and Tuff Memorial

Home-Hills MN through memorial funds and a grant from MN Department of Human Services. Linda mentioned the purchase was to connect care partners and persons with dementia to services and supports that would aid in their dementia journey. The residents have enjoyed having the pets so much that some residents have wanted repeat visits with the pets, some residents not wanting their visit with the pets to end, and even one resident did not want to give up the companion pet that she was introduced to, so her family ended up buying her a Companion Pet of her own that she keeps with her at all times!

MNRAAA is receiving Companion Pets funded through the MN Department of Human Services that will be distributed in our 27 county service area with partnership from Caregiver Consultants in our region.

To learn more about the Companion Pets visit Ageless Innovation Joy For all Competition here: [joyforall.com](http://joyforall.com)







## 27 Counties of Caregiving

**Skylar Menke, Intern**

This spring, the Program Development and Coordination staff at MNRAAA partnered with the Senior LinkAge Line® to create caregiver resource kits. The kits will be shared with Caregiver Consultants, employers, and other groups that support caregivers throughout the 27 counties we serve.

We worked with as many local partners as possible to purchase items for these kits, including the Treasured Times bookshop in Marshall, MN and Edie Weinstein, Minnesota's own young author of Grandpa & Lucy who personally signed every copy.

Our team put together 175 English language resource kits and 50 Spanish language kits. The kits include guides, brochures, flyers and books, including Coach Broyles'

Playbook by Frank Broyles, Creating Moments of Joy by Jolene Brackey, Five Wishes by Jim Towey, and Grandpa & Lucy by Edie Weinstein.

In addition, the following resources are available for free upon request from MNRAAA at 507-387-1256: Beyond the Workday Guide, CARE Act information flyer, Caregiver Consulting and Holding a Family Meeting brochures, Program Development and Coordination presentation flyer, Planning Ahead for Your Future Guide by Minnesota Board on Aging, Return to Community program flyer, and Senior LinkAge Line rack card.

Feel free to contact a member



of our Program Development and Coordination team if you are interested in accessing these free resources. To find the Program Developer for your area, go to [mnraaa.org/program-development](http://mnraaa.org/program-development).

## MNRAAA Trainings and Presentations

MNRAAA is offering training opportunities for older adults, caregivers and professionals. Many of these trainings are free and are held online.

To find upcoming trainings and presentations, visit our website at [MNRAAA.org/calendar](http://MNRAAA.org/calendar) or our Facebook page at [facebook.com/MNRAAA](https://facebook.com/MNRAAA).

### Upcoming Events

- August 9: Help is Just a Call Away: Senior LinkAge Line and Disability HUB MN
- August 10: New to Medicare Class
- August 10: Preadmission Screening and Return to Community
- August 17: Don't be a Target of Medicare and Consumer Fraud

Scan with your phone to visit MNRAAA's Eventbrite site.





## Enrolling in Medicare – Getting the Information you Need

Understanding Medicare can be overwhelming for most people. Knowing when and how to enroll can feel like a daunting process. But understanding some of the basics of Medicare will help you to take charge. Whether you are approaching age 65 or helping a friend or family member to understand their options, here are a few key things to know about enrolling in Medicare:

- › You can only enroll in Medicare at certain times.
- › There are factors, such as age and employment status, that determine when you

should enroll in Medicare to avoid paying penalties.

- › While some people are automatically enrolled in Medicare, most have to enroll themselves. You can enroll in Medicare by calling your local Social Security office or by visiting [www.ssa.gov](http://www.ssa.gov).
- › You have choices about how to receive your Medicare benefits and coverage, and you can make changes to your benefits and coverage during certain times of the year and if you qualify for a special enrollment period.

- › People with limited income and resources may be eligible to get help paying for some costs of Medicare.

The Senior LinkAge Line® can answer your questions about when and how to enroll in Medicare. They provide free, non-biased and comprehensive information about Medicare enrollment customized for you. Call 800-333-2433 Monday – Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. to speak to someone who can help. Personalized assistance is just a call away!

## Advance Beneficiary Notice - Medicare Notice of Non-Coverage

Medicare does not cover everything. People on Original Medicare will get a written notice from their medical provider before they receive a service or equipment to let them know if it will be covered by Medicare. This notice is called an Advance Beneficiary Notice of Noncoverage or ABN.

An ABN is not required if the equipment or service is never covered by Medicare, such as dental care, and is only required for those with Original Medicare and not for those with a Medicare Advantage Plan. If you are given an ABN form you must choose one of the three options.

1. You agree to pay for the item or service, but request the

provider submit the claim to Medicare. This allows you the right to appeal if Medicare denies payment.

2. You agree to pay for the item or service and do not want the claim submitted to Medicare.
3. You decline the service or item, and no claim is submitted.

An ABN is not a denial of payment. Instead, it is a warning to you that the service or item you will be receiving may not be covered. If a claim was submitted, you will receive a Medicare Summary Notice showing whether the claim was paid. If the claim was denied, you can follow the instructions

to file an appeal with Medicare.

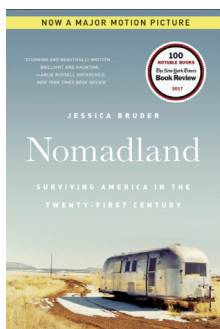
People who have questions or want help in appealing a denied claim can call the Senior LinkAge Line at 800-333-2433.



The Senior LinkAge Line is a free, statewide service of the Minnesota Board on Aging in partnership with Minnesota's Area Agencies on Aging. The Senior LinkAge Line is Minnesota's federally designated State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) and the place to call for questions and information on Medicare and much more.

## Book Review: Nomadland by Jessica Bruder

Beginning in this month's newsletter, MNRAAA staff will begin offering a sneak peek into a book or article that addresses issues important to older adults and/or their caregivers. In July, Becca Shanafelt is introducing us to Nomadland.



Nomadland, a narrative both telling and inspiring, gives us an inside glimpse to a growing group of individuals who are sometimes called “vandwellers.”

As we follow journalist Jessica Bruder in her multiple trips over three years living among them, we see the individual stories take flesh. Many opt to choose the open road with its freedom, sometimes unfriendly climate,

and small square footage in exchange for their previously trapped lifestyle beholden to the bills they can never get ahead of.

Some of the key economic and social issues illustrated in real lives are told as we meet people similar to our neighbors and friends. Many of these issues touch the greater older adult community including ageism in the workplace, affordability of housing, effects of the financial crisis of 2008, and the financial gender gap for retired adults.

Working conditions and hyper-consumerism for seasonal minimum wage workers is seen as we read from Jessica Bruder's experience what it is like to work the temporary jobs at Amazon warehouses, sugar beet farms, and campground hosting. We feel the squeeze of the middle class and see the results of gaps

in health care and holes in our social safety nets.

In an interview about her book, Jessica Bruder quotes George Orwell with, “It's adversity that brings out the best of what we love about human nature.” It is a truth that is seen in these lives where resilience, creativity, and loyalty are evident.

In these stories we get to explore one of the greatest assets of this nation, the beautiful vastness and varied land. In contrast we also get to experience one of its growing weaknesses. A nation that has economically failed a growing number of people in providing them the security and stability of the American Dream despite their hard work, effort, and ‘following all the rules.’

An entertaining and thought-provoking read for all.



Medicare and prescription drugs can be expensive. But help is available to cover some of these costs for those who qualify.

Call the Senior LinkAge Line at 800-333-2433 to find out if you can get help paying for Medicare.

**800-333-2433**  
[mn.gov/senior-linkage-line](https://mn.gov/senior-linkage-line)



Minnesota River Area Agency on Aging®

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## WE'D LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU

If you would like to read about specific topics in future MNRAAA *news* or to request MNRAAA *news* by email, contact us at: [kwolle@mnraaa.org](mailto:kwolle@mnraaa.org) or 507.387.1256 x102.

## September is Falls Awareness Month

*Kelly McDonough, Program Developer*

Falls Prevention Awareness Day is September 22, 2021. The first day of autumn is the designated time of year when National, state, and local partners collaborate to educate others about the impact of falls, share fall prevention strategies, and advocate for the expansion of evidence-based community fall prevention programs. Fall prevention is an investment in independence and supports quality of life as one ages.

Falling is not a normal part of aging. Although fall related injuries are often serious, they are preventable. Through practical lifestyle adjustments, evidence-based programs, and community partnerships, the number of falls among older adults can be reduced substantially.



YOU CAN PREVENT FALLS | 

Research indicates that the most effective interventions to prevent falls include environmental modifications along with risk assessment (including medication management) and physical activity (exercise).

The links below provide helpful tools and resources to help you create a fall prevention campaign:

- › [www.ncoa.org/older-adults/health/prevention/falls-prevention](http://www.ncoa.org/older-adults/health/prevention/falls-prevention)
- › [www.cdc.gov/stillgoingstrong/](http://www.cdc.gov/stillgoingstrong/)
- › [www.nia.nih.gov/health/prevent-falls-and-fractures](http://www.nia.nih.gov/health/prevent-falls-and-fractures)

- › [www.naccho.org/programs/community-health/injury-and-violence/older-adult-falls-prevention](http://www.naccho.org/programs/community-health/injury-and-violence/older-adult-falls-prevention)

During the month of September MNRAAA will be posting fall prevention information on social media. Please follow us on Facebook and Twitter for additional resources.

If you are interested in partnering with MNRAAA wwon promotional activities, go to [mnraaa.org/program-development](http://mnraaa.org/program-development) to find the MNRAAA Program Developer in your area.