

The Aging Network

Area Agency on Aging District 7, Inc.

Serving Adams, Brown, Gallia, Highland, Jackson, Lawrence, Pike, Ross, Scioto and Vinton Counties in Ohio

www.aaa7.org



AAA7 Staff Present at National Meeting

Staff from your local Area Agency on Aging District 7, Inc. (AAA7), was recently invited to make a presentation at the 2010 Community Living Program and Aging Disability Resource Center National Meeting, sponsored by the Federal Administration on Aging, Department of Veterans Affairs, and Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. The meeting was held in Alexandria, Va., February 22 through 24, 2010, with over 350 professionals from across the nation in attendance.



Pictured are AAA7 staff who attended the 2010 Community Living Program and Aging Disability Resource Center National Meeting. Left to right are **Donna Hurt, Merritt Sessor, Vicky Abdella and Rita Pauley.**

Vicky Abdella, RN, AAA7 Director of Community Services, and Rita Pauley, Planning and Program Development Manager, presented information on the AAA7's non-Medicaid community living program, *My Care, My Way*. Also in attendance from the AAA7 were Case Managers Donna Hurt and Merritt Sessor.

My Care, My Way is a non-Medicaid consumer-directed program that allows adults age 60 and older the most flexibility in choosing the support services they receive in their home. Consumers in the program have the opportunity to evaluate and choose who they would like to assist them in meeting their needs. Instead of the Agency managing the in-home services, with *My Care, My Way*, the consumer takes that responsibility, essentially becoming the "employer" of the providers.

In Ohio, *My Care, My Way* began development in late 2008 through a Nursing Home Diversion grant received by the Ohio Department of Aging from the Federal Administration on Aging. AAA7 was selected to serve as the only site in Ohio to demonstrate the activities within the project in order to guide development of similar programs throughout the state. Since the pilot was launched, 50 older adults are now participating throughout AAA7's ten-county district.

My Care, My Way requires the AAA7 to capture consumer eligibility, assessment, satisfaction and outcomes, as well as program costs and the direct savings created by assisting non-Medicaid consumers in a self-directed

program. Fortunately for residents in southern Ohio, the AAA7 has developed a process utilizing a software system already established at the Agency to capture the data to support success and growth of the program. It was this process and success that was a highlight of the AAA7's presentation at the national meeting.

AAA7's presence at the conference was most impressive as few states across the nation have been successful in totally utilizing a software system to capture all data that is needed for consumer success and program evaluation in their community living programs. The software the AAA7 utilizes to support this endeavor is the Social Assistance Management System developed by Harmony Information System, Inc.

Having the opportunity to share our successes with other programs and projects throughout the country was quite humbling for us," commented Abdella. "We had many questions and inquiries after our presentation and were quite pleased with the reception we received. Our development of a successful process through *My Care, My Way* has given our staff a sense of pride and ownership that will only enhance the services we provide. I am very proud of the work our Agency does each and every day to support safe and secure independent living for seniors in our region."

SPRING 2010

AAA7 Applauds Governor's Action to End Wait for Senior Services

Advocates for Ohio's older adults, including your local Area Agency on Aging District 7, Inc. (AAA7), are very appreciative to Governor Ted Strickland with the recent announcement of his order to end the waiting list for PASSPORT and other in-home and community services. With this action, 592 older adults on the waiting list across the state, including 52 in our 10-county district, are now able to access the long-term care they need and deserve.

PASSPORT (Pre-Admission Screening System Providing Options and Resources Today) is a Medicaid waiver program operated through the Ohio Department of Aging that provides medical care to qualifying seniors in home and community settings. Locally, PASSPORT is coordinated and administered by the AAA7 and is made possible by funds through the Ohio Department of Aging (ODA). Waiting lists were implemented by the ODA for these services in order to balance their budget for fiscal years 2010-2011.

"The AAA7, along with other area agencies across the state, is pleased that Governor Strickland called the order to eliminate this waiting list so that older Ohioans can receive the care they need and deserve without delay," commented Pamela K. Matura, Executive Director of the AAA7.

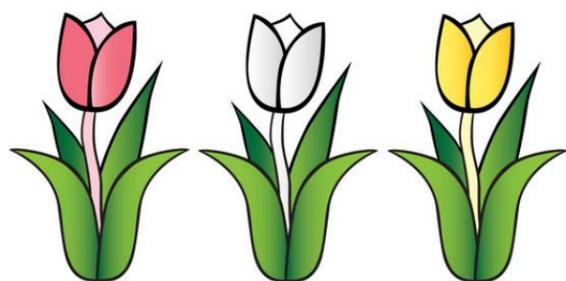
Services provided through PASSPORT include personal care, homemaking, home-delivered meals, medical emergency response systems, medical transportation and adult day care, in addition to home medical equipment and supplies. Those eligible for PASSPORT services include individuals 60 years of age or older who are Medicaid-eligible and live in a private residence where

they can be safely supported. Individuals who meet these requirements and need hands-on help with daily activities such as bathing, dressing and meals to remain at home could be eligible for PASSPORT services.

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Happy Spring!





Legislative News

Ohio's Home First Bill

On Wednesday, March 24, in one of its last actions before leaving for its Spring Break, the Ohio House of Representatives passed unanimously an amended version of the Home First Bill, House Bill 398 (HB 398). The law would revise waiting list provisions for PASSPORT and Assisted Living services under Ohio's Medicaid waiver program for those individuals who would prefer living at home with some assistance when nursing facility placement is their only option. This "Home First" legislation would extend the current program to older adults leaving hospitals or in abusive and self-neglect situations, as well as those who have depleted their assets in assisted living, or whose physicians have signed that they are at risk of nursing facility placement within 30 days.

A companion bill in the Senate, SB 214, passed out of committee by unanimous vote, but has not been introduced to the full Senate for a vote.

President Signs Healthcare Reform

President Barack Obama signed the law to reform health care, House Resolution (HR) 3590, the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, on Tuesday, March 23, 2010. The law will expand Medicaid to cover 16 million more people, reduce Medicare expenditures in the next decade by half a trillion dollars, and establish many demonstration projects to test innovative ways of delivering health care.

A second bill, HR 4872, the Health Care and Education Affordability Reconciliation Act of 2010, completes the overhaul of health care. It contains amendments to healthcare reform legislation that include:

- Changes in the levels of subsidies to help Americans buy health care insurance.
- Increased federal funding to states for Medicaid.
- Expanding the Medicare payroll tax for some higher-paid Americans to make up for a significant revenue drop created by delaying an excise tax until 2018 on high-cost health care plans the Senate proposed.
- Clarification of a provision requiring insurers to allow adult children to remain on their parents' insurance policies until their 26th birthday.

The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) issued a preliminary cost estimate for the legislation, which totals \$940 billion over 10 years and reduces federal deficits by \$138 billion during that same time. CBO also estimates that the reconciliation bill would save an additional \$9.9 billion in Medicare payments over the next 10 years by reducing increases for hospitals and rehabilitation facilities.

Of special interest to the aging network in Ohio are these reforms in the bills:

- Ohio's 1.8 million Medicare beneficiaries will receive all recommended preventive services for free and can visit their health care provider for a free annual wellness checkup and personalized prevention plan.
- 325,000 Medicare beneficiaries in Ohio hit the doughnut hole each year. The Medicare Part D doughnut hole will close by 2020. This is the gap in the Medicare prescription-drug benefit in which the Medicare beneficiary continues to pay the insurance premium but receives no help in paying the cost of drugs. In 2010, beneficiaries who fall into the doughnut hole will receive a \$250 rebate.
- Older adults will see a 50 percent cut in the cost of brand name drugs upon entering the donut hole.
- As overpayments to Medicare Advantage plans are reduced, the 74 percent of Ohio's older adults who are not enrolled in these plans will no longer subsidize them through their Medicare premiums.

Social Workers Recognized

March was National Social Work Month with the theme "Social Workers Inspire Community Action".

Most social workers serve individuals and families, providing resources and guidance that support social functioning. Through the Area Agency on Aging District 7, social workers cover a wide range of services to individuals in the Agency's 10-county District.

Social Workers with the AAA7 wear many different hats and take on a variety of roles including advocate, assessor, case manager, consultant, information sharer, and referrer. Social workers conduct these functions for the many programs available through the Agency that provide individuals with assistance to support independent living in their own home.

Social workers recommend and refer these individuals to services like personal care/homemaking, adult day care, assisted living, home repair, transportation, home-delivered meals, and client advocacy in order for them to remain safely and independently as possible in their home. Residents in the District's 10-county area who call the Agency can talk directly with a nurse or social worker who will assist them with information surrounding the programs and services that are available to best serve their needs. Social workers in the Agency assist with this process by serving as a facilitator to assist seniors with these services, determining what is best for their situation while assuring follow-through and follow-up.

"We applaud and salute our social workers throughout our Agency during National Social Work Month in March," stated Pamela K. Matura, Executive Director for the Area Agency on Aging District 7, Inc. "Through their hard work and dedication, seniors in our region have the resources that make it possible for them to live safely and securely in their own homes."



Adams County Office Social Workers



Gallia County Office Social Workers



Pike County Office Social Workers



Scioto County Office Social Workers

Spotlight On: Volunteer Ombudsmen



Looking for an opportunity to make a real difference in the lives of others? If so, the Area Agency on Aging District 7, Inc. (AAA7) has an opportunity for you or someone you know who may be interested in helping some of our most vulnerable citizens - nursing home residents.

Through AAA7's Volunteer Ombudsman Program, these special helpers visit nursing home residents on a regular basis to provide them with a link to the outside world. Through these visits, Volunteer Ombudsmen help to lessen the isolation and loneliness many residents experience. Volunteers also provide an essential voice for residents, providing advocacy and assistance for those who have concerns about their care.

Volunteer Ombudsmen plan their own schedules, are permitted to visit any day of the week, and are provided hands-on training and technical assistance by the AAA7's Ombudsman Program Staff. Volunteers are recognized during an annual event and invited to various AAA7 training programs and conferences at no cost.

Doug McCoard, a Volunteer Ombudsman from Pike County, who volunteers in Scioto County, does feel that he has made a difference for residents of nursing homes who are unable to speak for themselves. "What I like best about my role as a Volunteer Ombudsman is that I have the opportunity to not only speak for residents, but also provide residents with the encouragement and assistance to speak for themselves. It's what keeps me going back every week knowing that I am providing a voice for residents who may not feel they have one."

Gallipolis resident John Brewer feels he is giving back to the community when he volunteers his time in the Ombudsman Program. "I experience a lot of enjoyment and satisfaction through my time as a Volunteer Ombudsman," Brewer comments. "I am always welcomed with open arms by residents I come in contact with as they know I have their best interests at heart."

Lavon Shields of Jackson, who has served as a Volunteer Ombudsman for seven years, says volunteering gives her the "satisfaction that I have helped residents by serving as an advocate for them". She adds that the training provided by Agency staff provides volunteers with valuable knowledge that helps with providing this needed assistance. Shields encourages those individuals who have a love for people to consider becoming a Volunteer Ombudsman. "I enjoy every bit of it," she says. "Volunteer Ombudsmen are invaluable to the AAA7 Ombudsman Program and the residents they serve," says Kaye Inoshita, RN, Director of AAA7's Ombudsman Program. "Through their wonderful service, volunteers provide a regular presence in our large ten-county service region while assisting with concerns regarding resident care."

If you are interested in volunteering for an organization that makes a difference in the lives of others, please contact Cindy Oakes, Volunteer Coordinator, or Kaye Inoshita, toll-free at 1-800-582-7277.

AAA7 Staff Attend O4A Spring Conference



The Ohio Association of Area Agencies on Aging (O4A) hosted its 2010 Spring Conference in Columbus on March 23 and 24. The AAA7 was well represented with 21 staff in attendance.

Over the two-day Conference, staff listened to presentations on the long-term care federal outlook, Ohio Aging Network Coalition, Medicaid impact on Ohio, Ohio Department of Aging, new initiatives in the aging network, healthcare reform, and healthcare linkages with long-term care services and support. In addition, staff participated in a Legislative Reception held at the Ohio Statehouse Crypt where staff had the opportunity to meet and share conversations with our local elected officials at the State level.

Joined Hearts in Giving Honors Local Couples

First Lady Frances Strickland and the Ohio Department of Aging honored 22 couples on Friday, February 12, for their dedication to marriage and volunteerism at the eleventh annual Joined Hearts in Giving celebration. The event is held yearly in observance of Valentine's Day at the Governor's Residence in Columbus. Joined Hearts in Giving honors Ohioans at least 60 years of age who have been married 40 years or longer and share a commitment to volunteerism.

"Ohio is a better place because of the efforts of these great people," said Mrs. Strickland, the event's host. "Through the hours and hard work they volunteer, they embody all that makes this state exceptional."

"The devotion of these couples is truly heart-warming," said Barbara E. Riley, director of the Ohio Department of Aging. "Their commitment to each other and their passion to help others is a model we can all take to heart."

Locally, representatives from the Area Agency on Aging District 7, Inc., with administrative offices in Rio Grande, Ohio, were in attendance to celebrate the recognitions of couples who reside in the Agency's district which included Hugh and Barb Cahall of Mt. Orab in Brown County, and Earl and Betty Miller of Wheelersburg in Scioto County.

According to their nomination form, Hugh and Barb Cahall have volunteered throughout their 65-year marriage with various organizations, including the food pantry at their church, the VFW Hall, and Mt. Orab Women's Club. They helped to preserve the Mt. Orab Depot, and have served many local organizations including the Gideons, Eastern Star, Masons, Lions Club, Brown County Jail, McDonald House, Brown County Fair, and others. According to Barb, they will continue to volunteer in their community as long as they have the good health to do it.

Earl and Betty Miller have been married more than 59 years. As mentioned on their nomination form, Earl helped build an addition to their local church, St. Peter's Catholic



Pictured Left: Pam Matura and Hugh and Barb Cahill of Mt. Orab (Brown County).



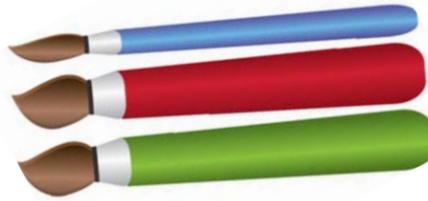
Pictured Right: Pam Matura and Earl and Betty Miller of Wheelersburg (Scioto County).

Church, where he also continues to assist with maintenance. He has worked with the Wheelersburg Athletic Association for more than 50 years and in July 2009, was inducted into the Wheelersburg High School Hall of Fame. In addition, three days a week, he delivers Kroger's day-old baked goods to St. Monica's Food Pantry. Betty works with the St. Vincent dePaul Society, has been involved with St. Peter's Mercy Meals for 20 years, and served as a member of the church choir for 25 years. As a 4-H leader, she taught the value of work and fun combined. She has made quilts with St. Peter's Ladies Guild for fund raising and was a long-standing member of the Mercy Hospital Guild.

Pam Matura, executive director of the Area Agency on Aging District 7, Inc., was in attendance to congratulate both the Cahall's and Miller's in person.

"What a wonderful testimony of marriage and volunteering these couples have demonstrated throughout their lives," commented Matura. "We applaud both the Cahall's and Miller's, in addition to all the couples across the state, who were honored at this special event. Their giving to others is a true inspiration to us all."

28th Annual Senior Citizens Art Show and Essay/Poetry Contest Announced



Are you age 55 or older with a talent for art or poetry/essay writing? If so, the Area Agency on Aging District 7, Inc. (AAA7) encourages you to participate in its 28th Annual Senior Citizens Art Show and Essay/Poetry Contest that is approaching soon.

This year's contest will be held June 1 through 4 and June 7 through 11 at the Esther Allen Greer Museum and Gallery located on the campus of the University of Rio Grande in Rio Grande, Ohio.

Anyone who is 55 years of age or older and a resident of Ohio may participate. The Area Agency on Aging District 7, Inc. requests no more than three entries in the Art Show per participant, and no more than five entries in the Essay/Poetry Contest per participant. In addition, all Art Show entries must be suitable for wall display. Those who wish to indicate their work is for sale may do so. Art entries must be no larger than two feet by two and a half feet, including the frame.

Examples of art categories that may be entered in the Contest include acrylic, charcoal, counted cross stitch, mixed media, oil, pastels, pencil, and photography. Judging themes include abstract, animals and birds, cartoons, floral, landscape, portraits (humans), seascape, and still life.

Artwork can be submitted through your local Senior Citizens Center in the ten counties included in AAA7's District (Adams, Brown, Gallia, Highland, Jackson, Lawrence, Pike, Ross, Scioto and Vinton) up until Monday, May 3, 2010, or the AAA7 Office located on the campus of the University of Rio Grande by Monday, May 10, 2010.

Essay and Poetry entries should be no more than 1,000 words in length and if possible, should be typed. There is no subject for entries and participants are asked to be creative. Essay and Poetry entries must be submitted to

the Area Agency on Aging District 7 Office no later than April 30, 2010. If interested in submitting an entry, participants are asked to mail two copies of their entry to: Area Agency on Aging District 7, Inc.; Attn: Sharon Bowman or Jenni Dovyak; F32-URG, PO Box 500; Rio Grande, Ohio 45674.

Those who are interested in either submitting an artwork or essay/poetry entry must obtain an application and rules form which is located on the Agency's website at www.aaa7.org. Once at the site, click on the Special Events/Art & Essay Contest link and print the form, or call the AAA7 toll-free at 1-800-582-7277 to request a form mailed to your residence.

Winners for the Contest will be announced the day of the Tea Reception on Friday, June 11, 2010, from 1:00 pm until 3:00 pm at the Esther Allen Greer Museum and Gallery. All participants, their guests, and Museum and Gallery visitors will be welcome to attend.

For more details about the Art Show and Essay/Poetry Contest and/or to request an application, please call toll-free at 1-800-582-7277.



2010 Board Meetings

June 21 - SOMC Friends Center
 August 18 - OSU Endeavor Center
 October 20 - OSU Endeavor Center
 December 22 - To Be Announced

Advisory Council Meetings

July 21 - OSU Endeavor Center
 October 20 - OSU Endeavor Center



Area Agency on Aging District 7, Inc.

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Your local Area Agency on Aging District 7, Inc. serves the following counties in Ohio: Adams, Brown, Gallia, Highland, Jackson, Lawrence, Pike, Ross, Scioto and Vinton. Services are rendered on a non-discriminatory basis. Those interested in learning more about the services provided through the Area Agency on Aging District 7 can also call toll-free at 1-800-582-7277. Here, individuals can talk directly with a nurse or social worker who will assist them with information surrounding the programs and services that are available to best serve their needs.

May is Older Americans Month!

Senior Citizens Day - May 18, 2010

The Ohio Department of Aging (ODA) recently announced the theme for Older Americans Month 2010 - "Age Strong! Live Long!" Each May is observed across the nation as Older Americans Month, a time to celebrate the contributions seniors make to their communities. The ODA establishes a theme each year to promote awareness of issues unique to this age group and to help local organizations plan events throughout the state.

Older Americans Month was established in 1963 to acknowledge the contributions of past and present older citizens. Every President since Kennedy has issued a formal proclamation during or before the month of May asking the entire nation to pay tribute in some way to older persons in their communities. The observance is sponsored by the US Administration on Aging.

"Ohioans are living longer, more active and more engaged lives than ever before.. and they are making a difference like never before," said Barbara E. Riley, director of the department. "Our seniors are in the workforce, taking college courses, and volunteering their time and talents. They are, indeed, aging strong, and we know this activity helps keep them healthy and vital."

For more information, log on to, www.aging.ohio.gov/news/olderamericansmonth/.



Age Strong! Live Long!