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Area Agency on Aging^{IIIA}
Kalamazoo County
Health & Community Services



Thoughts on the November Election and Beyond

I came across a good article from the National Council on Aging that covered 8 reasons the presidential candidates should be talking about long-term care. I will share it with you, but ask that you

consider its message for politicians at all levels, as it isn't only a national issue, it affects states and local governments and citizens of all ages. Here in Kalamazoo County, we will be addressing our community's long-term

supportive service needs and more through community conversations associated with presentations of our Senior Growth Needs Assessment and in preparation for a new multi-year planning cycle.
Judy Sivak, Director

8 Reasons the Presidential Candidates Should Be Talking About Long-Term Care

1. The need is now. About 12 million Americans with disabilities need long-term services and supports, nearly half of them under 65 years old.

2. The need is growing. As the U.S. population ages, the number of individuals needing long-term care is projected to double to 27 million by 2050. Over 70% of Americans who reach age 65 will need some form of long-term care in their lives.

3. Most Americans are not prepared for the high costs of long-term care. Medicare doesn't cover it, and less than 10% of Americans have private long-term care insurance. Private long-term care insurance plans are unaffordable for many Americans and unavailable to most individuals with disabilities due to underwriting practices.

4. Federal and state funding is dwindling. Medicaid is the

primary funding stream for long-term care, financing about 62% of total spending. But it requires individuals to impoverish themselves to receive the services they need. And due to the economic downturn, some states are cutting Medicaid services.

5. Nursing homes are not the answer. The vast majority of Americans want to receive care at home. Yet there remains a strong "institutional bias" within Medicaid. The majority of funding goes to services in nursing homes and other institutions, even though home and community-based services are more cost-effective.

6. Waiting lists for Medicaid home and community-based services have doubled over the past decade. Lack of available home and community-based services denies Americans choice, independence, productivity, and their rights against discrimination under

the U.S. Supreme Court Olmstead decision.

7. Family caregivers are getting burned out. The vast majority of long-term care is delivered informally by more than 65.7 million family members. Family members providing care often face negative impacts on their own health, ability to work, and other financial hardships. Caregiving has economic consequences for U.S. businesses, as well, in terms of lost productivity and higher health care costs.

8. There is a severe shortage of direct-care workers. The current direct-care workforce is at 3 million, and an additional 1.8 million workers will be needed over the next decade to keep pace with growing demand. The quality of home care jobs is poor due to low wages, few benefits, high turnover, and a high level of job stress and hazards. ♦

**Monday,
September 3**

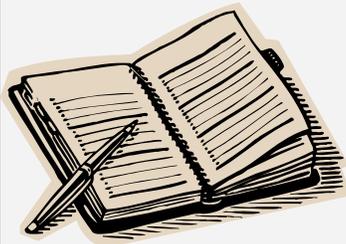
**Labor Day
Holiday**

Office Closed

**Saturday,
September 22**

Autumn begins





Coming soon...

Check out **Spotlight On** at <http://www.kalcounty.com/aaa/> for up-to-the-minute links to programs, workshops, events, alerts and more from the Area Agency on Aging IIIA

And, visit us on Facebook



[Area Agency on Aging IIIA of Kalamazoo County Health & Community Services](#)

The Advisor is published six times a year by the Area Agency on Aging, IIIA. If you would like to receive a copy by mail, please contact: Janice Bonita, Editor
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Area Agency on Aging, IIIA, Health & Community Services Dept., Kalamazoo County Government Director – Judy Sivak

Mark Your Calendar

Tuesday, Sept. 11: 6:00-8:00 PM, 346 West Michigan Ave., Ste. 100, Kalamazoo. **Transportation for Michigan** will hold a **Community Forum** to “help decide how Michigan rolls.” RSVP to Kay Chase at kay.chase@wmich.edu or 269-388-3777.

Monday, Sept. 17: KCASI Meeting, 1:15-3:00 PM, Senior Services Coover Center, 918 Jasper St., Kalamazoo. See article p. 3.

Friday, Sept. 28: **Professionals Focused on Aging (PFA)** will feature Judy Sivak, Director of the AAAIII, speaking on the Senior Growth Needs Assessment. 8:00 AM at Senior Services Coover Center, 918 Jasper St., Kalamazoo.

Tuesday, Oct. 2: **Senior Expo.** 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM, Kalamazoo Co. Expo Center & Fairground, 2900 Lake St., Kalamazoo.

Read more ▼

Tuesday, Oct. 16: Alzheimer’s Association **Schreiber Conference.** For more information contact WMU’s Office of Lifelong Learning and Education at 269-387-4174. To register online, visit www.alz.org/mglc.

Monday, Oct. 15: KCASI Meeting, 1:15 PM at Senior Services. See p. 3.

Friday, Oct. 26: PFA meets. Lisa Fuller, MMAP Regional Coordinator presents 2013 Medicare Updates, 8:00 AM at Senior Services.

Only a month until Senior Expo 2012

Set the date, call a friend, and be there on October 2 for the 16th annual Senior Expo at the Kalamazoo County Expo Center.

Exhibitor spaces are still available for this popular event. Our planning partners have been making sure that this year’s event will be better than ever. The annual event, free to attendees (seniors, “boomers,” caregivers, and others) will offer health screenings and flu shots provided by Bronson and Borgess. *Spark* magazine will have a section in its September issue including the exhibitor room maps and articles of interest—free at many locations in SW Michigan.

The event will be in Expo South and Main Expo—so you will have easy access to over 100 exhibitors, all on the east side of the beautiful new Expo Center. And, there are many new exhibitors this year you’ll want to visit. Attendees will enter through the newly-completed foyer, where nearby, the new food concessionaire will be located.

If you are a veteran, you can get a Kalamazoo County ID card good for discounts at a variety of stores and restaurants if you bring your military discharge and picture ID.

And, once again, you can bring your unwanted medications to the “Red Med Box” collection site in

Expo South for safe, free disposal. MMAP volunteer counselors will also be on hand to answer questions about Medicare and Medicaid.

Call Janice at 269-373-5147 for more information, or email jgboni@kalcounty.com.

The Area Agency on Aging IIIA thanks all Senior Expo Sponsors, including Gold Sponsors: Borgess Health and Bronson Hospital. Silver Sponsor: *SW Michigan Spark*. Bronze Sponsors: Educational Community Credit Union, Hospice Care of Southwest Michigan, Langeland Family Funeral Homes, Meridian Health Plan, Southwest Regional Rehabilitation Center, Walgreens ♦

I&A Corner

Redesign of Medicare.gov

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) recently announced that the redesign of Medicare.gov will make content on the site more accessible and easier to understand. Most users will be able to find what they're looking for directly on the home page. Some features include:

- A search for whether a specific test or service is covered under original Medicare
- The ability to get customized information
- Quick links to replace a lost Medicare card, find a Medicare Advantage or prescription drug plan, and get help with health care costs

Information & Assistance Line 269-373-5173

To see examples of these new features, please visit:

<http://www.cms.gov/apps/files/Medicare-gov-LB.pdf>

The new design responds to mobile devices, so users can get information such as coverage and cost details in the most convenient format. Medicare beneficiaries, counselors, and caregivers can check if a letter they received in the mail is an official communication by viewing descriptions of Medicare mailings. The popular "Medicare & You" handbook has its own page.

To view and start using the new tools and additional information, users are invited to visit www.Medicare.gov. ❖



Fall Programs Focus on Elections

There was a huge turn-out at KCASI's August program on *The Status of Social Security and Medicare* with Janet Witt from the National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare (see photo).

September's program will be topical and informative as well, when KCASI welcomes the Kalamazoo League of Women Voters to explain

Voting Rights and November 2012 Election Ballots.

KCASI meetings are open to the public, so plan to be there – especially if you've wanted answers to...

...Do I have to re-register if I only vote in the Presidential election?

Where can I get reliable information about the Michigan Supreme Court Justices?

If I forget my I.D., can I still vote?

Where can I get a sample ballot?

... and more.

The meetings are held at 1:15 PM at Senior Services Coover Center, 918 Jasper Street, Kalamazoo. Call 269-373-5147 for information about meetings or membership.

On October 15th KCASI holds a forum during which

candidates for elected offices – Sheriff, Drain Commissioner, County clerk, treasurer & Prosecuting Attorney – are invited to discuss where they stand on local issues.

And coming up in November, a mini-expo of KCASI sponsoring organizations is scheduled when you can find out more about these community resources.

Thanks to 2012 Sponsors: Area Agency on Aging IIIA, AT&T Pioneers-Kalamazoo Club 315, Borgess Health, Crossroads Village Apartments, Disability Network Southwest Michigan, Ely Manor, Fresh perspective Home Care, Life EMS Ambulance, Park Place Assisted Living, Presbyterian Villages of Michigan, Senior Citizens home Health Care, Senior Services, Inc., UnitedHealthcare Community Plan, WMU-Alliance Senior Day Services. ♦



L. to R., Janet Witt; Bette Hawkins, KCASI President; Judy Sivak, KCASI Liaison

HEALTH

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recently published "Recommendations for the Identification of Chronic Hepatitis C Virus Infection Among Persons Born During 1945 – 1965," new recommendations that call for all Americans born from 1945 through 1965 or "baby boomers" to get a one-time blood test for the hepatitis C virus (HCV).

In the United States, hepatitis C is the leading cause of liver transplants and primary liver cancer, which is the fastest-rising cause of cancer-related deaths. People born from 1945 through 1965 currently account for more than 75% of adults infected with hepatitis C in the U.S. and are five times more likely to be infected than other adults. Each year, more than 15,000 Americans, most of them baby boomers, die from hepatitis C-related illness, such as cirrhosis and liver cancer.

New CDC Recommendations on Hepatitis C

**KNOW
MORE
HEPATITIS™**



Unfortunately, over the last decade, deaths have been increasing steadily. Without expanded access to HCV testing, care, and treatment, mortality among those living with HCV infection will continue to rise into the next decade.

New treatments are now available that can cure up to 75% of infections, and even more promising treatments are expected in the future. Linking individuals to appropriate care and treatment would prevent the costly consequences of liver cancer and other chronic liver diseases and ultimately save more than 120,000 lives. For more information, visit <http://www.cdc.gov/knowmorehepatitis/> ■

"...new recommendations...call for all Americans born from 1945 through 1965 or "baby boomers" to get a one-time blood test for the hepatitis C virus..."

Prevent West Nile Virus

By now you've likely heard that the cases of West Nile Virus (WNV) in our area are nearing record numbers. WNV is a seasonal epidemic in North America that flares up in the summer and continues into the fall, according to the Centers for Disease Control, and is a potentially serious illness. Among those with severe illness due to West Nile virus, records of case-fatality rates range from 3% to 15% and are highest among the elderly.

The easiest and best way to avoid WNV is to prevent mosquito bites. Here's what you can do to control them:

<http://www.kalcounty.com/userfiles/hcs/hottopics/Mosquitoes%20Advice%20rp04-2012.pdf>

For more information, you can visit the CDC Web site:

http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/westnile/wnv_factsheet.htm



Congratulations to Covenant Senior Day Program for being Chosen as 2012 ArtPrize Participant

Grand Rapids Community College Spectrum Theater is sponsoring artwork by Covenant Senior Day Program participants at the annual ArtPrize September 19 through October 7.

ArtPrize is the world's largest art competition, with \$560,000 in total prizes; \$360,000 awarded by public vote; and \$200,000 awarded by a select group of art experts.

Covenant's entry, "Reaching Out for Understanding," is a multimedia collection of visual art which displays an assortment of actual hand molds of elders who are coping with dementia.

Found objects and tie-dye cloth panels provide a full spectrum of color as a backdrop. Hands reach out for mutual human connection. Each individual artist "handcrafted" their own contribution, designed to raise awareness about their ability to sustain and overcome chronic conditions while maintaining dignity, optimism, and intrinsic creativity. By utilizing dementia-specific knowledge in their design elements the project attends to the needs of elders with cognitive challenges. Through the understanding of importance of sensory integration the collaborative artists have created profound pieces of

narrative which communicates beyond words.

If you go to ArtPrize, vote to support these elder artists and their entry, "Reaching Out for Understanding."



For more about ArtPrize visit <http://www.artprize.org/> ❖

It's A Matter of Balance

*Village of Sage Grove
Matter of Balance program
summer 2012 graduates*

"Each participant came to the class wondering if this class was going to be helpful. They graduated with the satisfaction of knowing they had conquered their fear of falling and had established a bond that would allow them to help each other" said Lucinda Stinson, MPA, (left), Matter of Balance Master Trainer with the Kalamazoo County Area Agency on Aging Healthy Living Programs.



A Matter of Balance— Falls Prevention, is an 8-session, evidence-based workshop series offering information about:

- Falls Prevention
- Home Safety
- Exercise to lower the risk of falls
- Goal setting for increasing activity.



VETERAN COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Mark you calendar

Veteran Community Partnership
SW Michigan
Quarterly Partnership Meeting

Friday, September 21, 2012

9:30 a.m. – Noon

Location: Van Buren ISD

Conference Center
490 South Paw Paw Street, Lawrence, MI

Hope you can join us! Please invite others!

(We especially encourage our partners from Van Buren, Berrien and Cass Counties to join us.)

For more information and workshops scheduled for A Matter of Balance and other Healthy Living Programs in our community, visit:

http://www.kalcounty.com/aaa/healthy_living_programs.html

or

<http://www.kalcounty.com/aaa/>

Spotlight On for the most up-to-date community calendar of programs.

or call the Healthy Living Programs line: 269-373-5382.

Staff News

Congratulations to our wonderful AAA all-stars whose anniversaries are in September and October:

Choices for Independence

Anne Zemlick 7 yrs.
Patti Nash 7 yrs.
Marilyn Reed 3 yrs.

Long Term Care Ombudsman

Kelly Jonker 5 yrs.

We celebrate your hard work and dedication—and for being you!



Medicare Part D Open Enrollment

Every year, people with Medicare get to explore new choices and pick the health and drug plans that work best for them. Medicare Part D Open

Enrollment period starts October 15 – and ends December 7. This gives people a full seven weeks to compare and make decisions, and ensures

that they will have essential plan materials and membership cards in hand on January 1, 2013 when new coverage starts. ■

Walk to End Alzheimers 2012

Sunday, October 7 is the annual Walk to End Alzheimers at Celery Flats in Portage. Registration opens at 12:00 Noon, and the Walk begins at 1:30 PM.

There will be 1 and 3 mile routes.

You can participate as an individual or on "teams." Or donate to a good cause with your financial



support of a walker. For information and to sign up: http://act.alz.org/site/TR?r_id=1873&pg=entry

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