

40 years

MISSOULA AGING SERVICES

CONNECTIONS

WINTER

A Season of Reflection and Gratitude



As Missoula Aging Services (MAS) celebrates its 40th anniversary, I find myself reflecting on the Agency's beginnings, which are deeply rooted in volunteerism. MAS got its start in the early 1980s, with the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program. As more programs and services have been added over the years, volunteers have continued to play a vital role in the organization, delivering meals, supporting caregivers, and sharing their skills with

schools and community organizations across Missoula.

Our community has certainly changed and evolved over the last 40 years, with MAS changing and evolving right along with it, creating or reworking programs and services to better meet community needs. From one program and six employees to more than 20 programs and a staff of over 60, MAS is proud to support older adults and caregivers throughout Missoula County.

As MAS prepares for the future, we are currently developing the next Area Plan on Aging, along with creating a new strategic plan in the coming year. Part of the next evolution of MAS involves reimagining how we can best match volunteers with local needs. Volunteers will enjoy more flexibility and freedom in how they volunteer, so they can focus on making an even greater impact.

During this holiday season, I am profoundly grateful for everyone who played a part in the first 40 years at MAS and to everyone who continues to support the work and mission of the Agency. I look forward to the next 40 years and beyond, a future in which our community ages with confidence and without fear.

Wishing you a happy and healthy holiday season,

Lisa Sheppard

Chief Executive Officer



Here for You.

- **Aging in Place:**
Care Management, Home Modifications, Veteran Directed Care, Memory Care Support Services, Homemaking, Payroll Services for Veterans and Caregivers
- **Nutrition:**
Meals on Wheels, Community Lunches, Liquid Nutrition (Ensure®)
- **Expert Assistance and Education:**
Call Center, Medicare & Medicaid Consultations, Resource Center, Educational Classes and Workshops, Lifelong Connections
- **Caregiver Support:**
Family Caregiver Support, In-Home Support Services (Respite, Homemaking and Personal Care), Caregiver Support Groups
- **Community Engagement:**
Volunteer Grandparents, Volunteer Companions, Friendly Visitors, Meals on Wheels Volunteers
- **Safety and Advocacy:**
Montana Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP), Long-term Care Ombudsman Program, Money Management Services

WE'RE PROUD *of* OUR YEARS

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Missoula Aging Services does not sell or release the names on our mailing list.

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Connect with us on:



40 Years In Perspective



For 40 great years, Missoula Aging Services (MAS) has kept its focus on the wellbeing of older adults. From very humble beginnings in 1982 with few programs, namely Congregate Meals and the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program, we were able to exponentially grow to meet the ever-changing needs of older adults.

During the last 40 years, MAS has been guided by the goal of supporting the independence, dignity and health of older adults and those who care for them. Along the way, many volunteers, donors and staff members have made this work possible. We are grateful to belong to a community that is dedicated to serving those in need and giving their time, energy and talents.

Over the years, growing older has become more complex, and MAS has expanded to meet those new needs. Navigating the long-term care system, changes in health care and technology and the cost of aging are just a few of the challenges facing older adults.

Our skilled staff provide information, assistance, referrals, home care, education, nutrition services and so much more. MAS has become the one-stop-shop for senior services. This doesn't mean we can do it all, no one can, but we do what we can to meet the need. We could not accomplish all that we do without the generous support of a caring community.

From early days with a small staff and no computers, we've grown to scores of programs and services and over 60 skilled staff dedicated to serving older adults. It's been a privilege and honor for the past 40 years for Missoula Aging Services to serve older adults, and it is nothing short of inspiring to see the spirit of service in MAS volunteers making Missoula a better community for older adults every day.

Debbie Lester
Executive Director, 406 Financial Services
Missoula Aging Services

40
years

GENERATIONS OF CARE Celebrating National Family Caregiver Month

November is National Family Caregiver Month, an important time each year to recognize family caregivers and celebrate their efforts. It is also a time to raise awareness about family caregiving issues, provide education for family caregivers, and increase support.

The Family Caregiver Support Program at Missoula Aging Services matches family caregivers in Missoula and Ravalli Counties with a Family Caregiver Support Specialist. The Support Specialist provides one-on-one guidance to help navigate the responsibilities of caregiving and promote self-care. After a an initial assessment, services are catered to each individual caregiver based on needs and preferences. Together, a care plan is created and local resources are identified to help reduce stress and prioritize self-care, including support groups, counseling, locating respite care, and education opportunities. Support is ongoing with follow-up consultations at regular intervals that may include adjustments to the plan as needed. Having expert support to find the right resources can make a big difference for caregivers with limited time and energy.

Family members may hesitate to identify themselves as a caregiver. In these cases, they may be reluctant to reach out for information or support. Research indicates that once people identify as a caregiver, they are more likely to pursue available services for themselves or those they care for. Additionally, a caregiver may have the opportunity to feel a sense of belonging and connection with others in similar caregiving situations. The transition to identifying oneself as a caregiver can happen over time or can be sudden due to an abrupt change in their loved one's needs. The Family Caregiver Support program can help a family caregiver to recognize their needs and become more proactive and empowered.

If you are providing care to a loved one or know of someone who may benefit from the Family Caregiver Support Program, please reach out for support.



"Having supports in place has made a huge difference for me, I don't feel like I'm going through this alone. I feel like I can finally breathe again."

- LOCAL FAMILY CAREGIVER

HOME MODIFICATIONS

Bring Safety and Peace of Mind

Missoula Aging Services is pleased to share a new program for older adults, Home Modifications. Affordable home repairs and improvements bring safety and peace of mind to anyone who wants to age in place. Simple repairs and improvements increase safety at home. After a no-cost consultation, an estimate is provided for labor and materials. At this time, the program is available to people over sixty living in Missoula.

WE CAN HELP WITH:

- Grab Bars
- Accessible Bathroom Fixtures
- Door and Window Repair or Replacement
- Small Plumbing and Electrical Repairs
- Weatherization
- Ramps
- Winterization
- Door and Window Trim
- Safety Latches
- Toilet Risers
- Smoke and CO2 Detectors
- Indoor and Outdoor Hand Railings
- Light Fixture Replacement



HOW MUCH DOES IT COST?

The cost of the modifications will vary depending on what a person needs to have installed. Clients will be charged for parts at cost and labor will be billed at \$50/hour.

PROJECTS WE CAN'T DO:

Large plumbing and electrical repairs, painting, building full projects (porches, sheds, add-ons), remodels, tile and grout, appliance repair or replacement, roof repairs, large drywall projects, finishing work.

40
years

"Over the years I've watched MAS as our leaders and staff continue to seek and implement new programs and services to serve the ever growing and changing needs of the community. I've watched in awe as new programs developed and existing programs expanded. It's been my pleasure to serve such a dynamic organization providing services to our clients, their families, caregivers and our volunteers! Thank you MAS for all you do, and have done over the past 40 years!"

- MARY DALTON, EMPLOYEE SINCE 2005

40 YEARS WITH VOLUNTEERS

Fitting for the 40th anniversary of Missoula Aging Services, I recently discovered a treasure trove in the office of one of our staff members. She has carefully collected and catalogued every issue of this publication, *Connections*, since 1995. As I turned through the pages of history, I was struck by the overwhelming theme of volunteerism. In the first *Connections* in the binder, from February 1995, an article highlights the service of Foster Grandparent Lorena Jensen. She spent most of her life cooking for thrashing crews, working as a receptionist, a nurses' aide, a postal clerk, office worker and more. Years after her retirement she began volunteering. She cited the hugs and the affection from the children as the greatest of rewards.

A few pages and several years later, I found an article written in the fall of 1999. It highlighted a volunteer from Belarus, Stepan Simonovich, who was helping support refugees who had come from Belarus to Montana to escape religious, political and ethnic persecution. He said at the time, "It makes my soul feel good." A few years later, MAS brought on 3 more volunteers from the Belarus community, Misha, Alexandra and Yakov Chinikailo. These volunteers continued to support their community, volunteering over 19,000 hours and driving 38,254 miles to help their friends and neighbors access needed services.

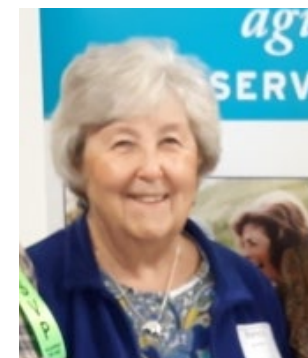
In 2011, we were thrilled to welcome Ge and Chue "Chuck" Vang, who have provided invaluable service to support older adults in Missoula's Hmong community. Collectively, these volunteers have worked to ensure an equitable and accessible community for all our friends and neighbors.

In the winter of 2016, an article highlighted the importance of Medicare Open Enrollment volunteers. That year 26 volunteers assisted the Resource Center in scheduling consultations, entering information and updating medication lists. Some earned certification by the State Health Insurance Program. The Resource Center Director said "Without these volunteers, we simply wouldn't be able to help as many clients as we do during open enrollment."

Page after page, story after story, I'm reading about humble individuals who accomplished mighty tasks as volunteers. The foundations of this organization are, and will continue to be, built upon the strength and vitality of the volunteers who we are honored to work beside.

-Ria Overholt, Volunteer Services Manager

Serving Others with Joy: Volunteer Spotlight



Nancy Chandler
11 years of service

Nancy's caring and thoughtful demeanor is a welcome addition to our daily activities at MAS. The experience Nancy brings to her volunteer efforts here is impressive and she is a master at organization. For years, Nancy volunteered at the front desk of MAS, being the first face clients would encounter. She brought professionalism to every interaction, but first and foremost, she treated each individual with kindness and respect.

There are so many other valuable volunteer projects throughout MAS that Nancy has given her time and energy to; the impact of her work is never taken for granted. As with so many who give of themselves, Nancy serves as an inspiration to volunteer. She brings the gift of herself every time she volunteers, through her humor, her smarts, and her attention to detail. We are grateful for you, Nancy, and truly appreciate all you have given to MAS.

MAJOR DONORS

August - October 2022

Individuals and Businesses
who made gifts of \$200 or
more:

Anonymous
Dorleen Bakke
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Betty Winchell
Dean & Sharon Yould

40 years

“It has been such an honor in my life to volunteer for such an outstanding agency. Over my 14 years working with them, I have witnessed their compassion and dedication towards helping older adults. Our community is so fortunate to have them! Happy 40th Anniversary, MAS!”

- ROBERTA SMITH. BOARD MEMBER 2006-2011, 2016-PRESENT

“I love being part of an organization that has such a positive impact on the community. When I tell people I work for 406 Financial Services at MAS, I always hear ‘You all do such great work!’”

- KIM FRASER, MAS/406 FINANCIAL EMPLOYEE SINCE 2000

“Collaborating with MAS staff, the dedicated volunteers and our community partners to promote the independence, dignity and health of older adults and their caregivers is meaningful beyond words. Working for an organization that also genuinely cares about their clients, employees and volunteers is truly a gift. My heart is full each day I work at MAS!”

- ALICIA CRANDALL, EMPLOYEE SINCE 2008

“Through its many programs MAS has been a lifeline for Missoula area seniors, their families, and their caregivers for over 40 years. I know that MAS has the passionate leadership, dedicated staff, and committed volunteers to carry on their great work for the next 40 years and beyond.”

- DAN DOYLE, GOVERNING BOARD MEMBER 1998-2010

GIFTS IN HONOR OF INDIVIDUALS

August - October 2022

Daryl Decker
Ingrid Davis

Edith George
Loren & Alexandra Burton

Iva Rose Mackenzie
Linda Jensen

Deirdre McNamer
Kathleen McCart

Margaret Rogers
Anonymous

Bryon & Colleen Smith
Dan Combo

Kathy Young
Kay Stone

Arvid Galbavy
Leon & Sharon Scott
Marion Yates

Charles Gibson
Patricia Gibson

Joe Hammond
Karen Hammond

Esther Heyer
Anonymous
Rocky Allen
Judy Bramlette
Douglas & Nancy Heyer
Roger & Linnea Kahler
Debbie Popp
Deanna Raisel
John Swanson

Con Kelly
Terry & Mary Zahn

Jack Kiserow
David & Gerrie Diettrich

Myrna Kitchin
Gilbert & Lavonne Madden
Paul & Nina Murch

Robert Lee
Bob & Kimberly Murray

George Matthews
Robert Waugh

Ann Lenore McDonald
Jacqueline Hofmann & Jamie Yule

Carol Meisinger
Richard Meisinger

Nancy Norsby
Victor Machart

Fred A. Olson
Dorothy Olson

Darlene Phillip
Jim & Donna Koch

Larry Riley
Cynthia Thiel

Marie Rising
John & Sharon Reiter

Carol Schlauch
Donna Sherron

William Schwaderer
Richard Meisinger

Mary Schwarz
Raneid Patrick

Sharon Sendon
George Sendon

Donald Snavelly
Vicky Hammond & Richard Scharfe

Marc Steinberg
Hannah Craven

Ina Swanson
Anonymous
Barbara Reider
Robert Waugh

John Talbot
Marilyn Bruya
Jim & Donna Koch
Paul & Elizabeth Mast
Larry & Mary White

Bob Yocum
Deborah Trowbridge

GIFTS IN MEMORY OF INDIVIDUALS

August - October 2022

Phil Bakke
Dorleen Bakke

Patricia Blank
Richard Blank

Georgette Dosch
Lee Dosch

“For 40 years MAS has recruited caring, talented staff who thrive on the mission. As a result, our community has the best up-to-date resources, programing and advocates for older adults and their loved ones.”

- SUSAN KOHLER, MAS CEO 1984-2022

“Forty years of service to Missoula area seniors and their supporters! Congratulations! Until I became associated with MAS I had no idea how much they do nor how well they do it. Here’s to forty more!”

- BURKE TOWNSEND, GOVERNING BOARD MEMBER 1999-2015

“I’ve seen so many changes in my 22 years at MAS, but two things remain the same: Hiring great people and always striving to be the best aging advocate that Missoula could ask for!”

- RENEE LABRIE-SHANKS, EMPLOYEE SINCE 2000

A Season of Compassion & Giving

Preparing for the holidays can mean a variety of things to different people. Some enjoy hanging lights and decorations, while others begin planning meals with family and friends. But for many older adults in Missoula County, the holidays can bring loneliness and isolation, especially as weather begins to impact the ability to safely travel.

At Missoula Aging Services (MAS), we recognize each person's needs are unique. The programs and resources we offer provide personalized support to local older adults and caregivers. As a 501(c)3 non-profit, MAS is funded in a variety of ways; from local business support and foundations to donations from generous individuals like you.



As you begin your holiday planning this year, we ask you to remember your older adult neighbors too, by making a tax-deductible donation to MAS. Donations can be made in any amount and can be designated to the program of your choosing. Scan the QR code to make an online gift, or donate by mailing the enclosed envelope to MAS. Our annual holiday Giving Trees will also be located at the Missoula Library and other locations in the community. Thank you for your support!

Providing So Much More than A Meal



Most of us wake to our days with the idea of possibilities ahead, an unspoken hope that life may reveal a path of renewal or simply a sense of wonder at the unexpected. Common connections to all the experiences that bind us as humans can motivate each of us to improve our understanding of each other where our paths, culture, and life experiences do diverge. It's an easy trap to fall into when someone shares their story—a story that may be completely foreign to our own—to rush to tell our story and forget to immerse ourselves in the life of another person's story. Many in our community immerse themselves through empathy and compassion to deliver Meals on Wheels to hundreds of

individuals each day, volunteering to connect to someone in need, to be that possibility or unspoken hope in a person's day.

Delivering a hot lunch to a couple who have been married 65 years is as basic and quietly impactful as it gets in helping people thrive and remain as independent as possible in their homes. This same couple volunteered years earlier through the food bank and also with children in foster care, bringing their background in education into play, giving of themselves and the life story they built together. Their commitment and care for others when they volunteered has obviously come full circle, echoing back to a new generation of volunteers who selflessly give their time and energy to meet the needs of home-bound and disabled people in our community through the simple act of delivering a meal to someone's door, and the nourishment, hope, and light that simple, but powerful, act provides.

-Dean Thompson, Nutrition Program Coordinator

Lifelong Connections Tablets Are Ready

Lifelong Connections, a program connecting older adults in Missoula County with tablets and training, has received 25 additional tablets to be distributed to members in the community, so more older adults in Missoula County can connect with online resources, friends, and family.

The Lifelong Connections program launched in 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The program was created to combat social isolation and provide telehealth opportunities so older adults could stay connected with their physicians when in-person interactions were considered unsafe. To date, 100 people have taken advantage of the program in Missoula, nine individuals have accepted tablets in Seeley Lake, and 21 tablets have been distributed in Ravalli County. Volunteer trainers work one-on-one with older adults to provide training on the basics of using email, Facetime, Zoom, and other programs.

Even before the pandemic, many older adults in our community had limited internet and computer access. Often, equipment was outdated and didn't have cameras or microphones, which made staying connected to their physicians through telehealth impossible. Lifelong Connections provides wireless internet service with the tablets, so they are still accessible to those who do not have their own internet service.



Lifelong Connections program manager Madison Moldenhauer shares, "It has been extremely rewarding to see the success with this program. Older adults using Lifelong Connections now have access to telehealth and can stay in touch with friends and family online, which greatly helps combat social isolation."

Lifelong Connections is currently seeking more participants and volunteers. Interested in the program? Call MAS at (406)728-7682 or visit the website to learn more.



In Memoriam
In honor and remembrance of these dedicated individuals whose volunteering enhanced the lives of those they served.

Betty Skibsted
RSVP Volunteer
Sally Ray
Senior Companion Volunteer

Missoula Aging Services Partner Spotlight

SEELEY LAKE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL: Volunteer Station, 22 years

Intergenerational volunteer opportunities bring together older adults and children, providing space for interaction and connection. When this occurs, we see benefits flowing out into the community as traditions and values are shared, empathy is nurtured and all involved experience a sense of purpose and identity. In 1990, MAS began a volunteer partnership with Seeley Lake Elementary School. In a time when school staff are facing new challenges and dealing with understaffing, it warms our hearts to see them making space for volunteers. They recognize how these volunteers add to the resiliency of the children and welcome them into the classroom.

Volunteer Grandparent Pearl Hawkins has been helping preschoolers for over 19 years. Pearl shares "I'm with the kids, playing house and dolls and whatever they want to play. I dance with them and I get down on the floor with them. If that doesn't keep you young, I don't know what does."

Tutor Jim Haueter began volunteering last year and was happy to return this year. About volunteering at Seeley School, Tutor Jim Haueter said, "I have a new appreciation for teachers and the teaching profession and the whole school system."

"Mr. Jim is always willing to be an extra adult to assist me with special lessons and always steps in with kiddos that need extra assistance," wrote teacher Rachel Bemis. "No adult that I bring into my classroom has ever garnished the attention like Mr. Jim. Even with his weekly visits, the kids can't help but run up to him and give him a big hug."

40 years



Volunteer Pearl Hawkins at Seeley Lake School



"Volunteering was good for me and got me involved in the community. I've met a lot of good folks."

- VOLUNTEER JIM HAUETER

Staff News at MAS

For 40 years, the dedicated staff of Missoula Aging Services has worked to provide information, programs, and services to our community. The Agency welcomed a new staff member to the team this fall.

CLINT CHRESTENSON joined MAS as a Call Center Specialist in August. He is a Missoula native who recently returned after two decades living in Idaho. Before joining the Agency, Clint worked primarily in financial analysis and financial services in Boise. He is glad to be back in Montana and values being a part of the MAS Customer Service team.

CELEBRATING YEARS OF SERVICE

At Missoula Aging Services, we appreciate the incredible work our staff does every day. We simply couldn't do it without them! This past year, MAS had the privilege of recognizing the following staff members for achieving a Years of Service Milestone. We are honored to celebrate these individuals and look forward to walking with all staff as they reach their Milestones with us. Congratulations!

Heather Bergerson	Veteran Directed Care Coordinator	5 Years
Beth Diettert	Call Center Specialist	5 Years
Darlene Kester	Call Center Specialist	5 Years
Heatherann Wayne	Personal Care Assistant	5 Years

Looking for meaningful work for one of Missoula's premier employers? MAS is now hiring for PCA's and Housekeeping Assistants. Visit our website for more information.



Share the Love

For 15 years, Subaru retailers have helped support the delivery of nearly 4 million meals and friendly visits to our homebound neighbors served by Meals on Wheels. From November 17 through January 3, 2023, Subaru retailers will donate \$250 for every new vehicle purchased or leased to the customer's choice of participating charities, including Meals on Wheels. Missoula Aging Services is proud to partner with Subaru once again this year. When you visit Subaru of Missoula, be sure to thank them for the support!

EST. 1982

MISSOULA *aging* SERVICES

WE'RE PROUD *of* OUR YEARS

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MISSOULAAGINGSERVICES.ORG

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MAS Events

VIRTUAL NEW TO MEDICARE WORKSHOP

Thursday, January 19 from 6-7:30 pm

Thursday, February 16 from 12-1:30 pm

Participate online using Zoom. Tickets available for a suggestion contribution of \$20 or 2 for \$35.

No cost and reduced cost tickets available for Montana residents in need.

Register online: <https://medicaremas.eventbrite.com>

VIRTUAL AGING MASTERY PROGRAM® (11-WEEK WINTER SESSION)

Attend via Zoom from 10 am-2 pm

First class meets Tuesday, January 3, and continues on following Mondays through March 20.

Tickets available for a suggestion contribution of \$65.

No cost and reduced cost tickets available for Montana residents in need.

Register online: <https://agingmasterymas.eventbrite.com>

VIRTUAL CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUP

Second Monday of each Month from 4-5 pm

Participate online using Zoom. No cost.

Register online: <https://bit.ly/3a9wn9x>

Third Tuesday of each Month from 1-2 pm

Participate online using Zoom. No cost.

Register online: <https://bit.ly/2YkyVPU>

VIRTUAL SUPPORT GROUP FOR RELATIVES RAISING CHILDREN (MT KINSHIP NAVIGATOR)

Third Wednesday of each Month from 12:30-1:30 pm

Participate online using Zoom. No cost.

Register online: <https://bit.ly/3fb2EjU>

VIRTUAL MEMORY LOSS CONVERSATIONS

Thursdays from 10-11 am

New attendees welcome! Participate online using Zoom.

No cost. Facilitated by Dementia Friendly Missoula.

Register online: <https://bit.ly/3ITnAsY>

WATCH THIS SPACE:

A new class in 2023 **A MATTER OF BALANCE**

Call (406) 728-7682 to register by phone.

View a full list of events at

MISSOULAAGINGSERVICES.ORG