Missoula Aging Services remains committed to connecting older adults and caregivers to the resources they need, especially during this critical time. The pandemic has caused all of us to make changes, but it has also pushed us to find new and creative ways to serve our clients.

Through digital resources like Zoom, we’re happy to say that many of our classes and support groups are back! In fact, these virtual opportunities have allowed some clients to participate for the first time. One caregiver shared that he had never been able to attend support groups in person. This new format, where clients call in virtually, allowed him to connect with other caregivers while staying safely at home.

Technology is also a valuable tool for preventing isolation. As the Centers for Disease Control recommends social distancing, video chatting, emails and other digital means of connection are vital. We know not everyone has the resources or experience. That is why MAS is developing a new program to assist older adults with technology. The program includes an intergenerational learning opportunity, providing a safe learning environment and socializing time for clients. If the client doesn’t have a device to use MAS will provide a tablet or device to the client.

Although COVID-19 has provided challenges to many of us on a personal and professional level, together we can find innovative ways to remain connected.

Thank you for your support,

Susan Kohler
Chief Executive Officer

#MaskUp Montana!
Many of us have experienced first-hand the detrimental impact of social isolation and loneliness as we are encouraged to stay at home and social distance during the pandemic. For vulnerable populations, this is a particularly difficult time.

With new directives placing strict limits on visitors to nursing homes and many assisted living facilities taking similar precautions, friends and families of residents living in long-term care facilities are using creative ways to connect through technology, snail mail and window visits. Video chat, FaceTime, and Zoom are just a few ways to stay connected through technology. Residents love to receive handwritten notes or cards, or a care package including photos, crossword puzzles or snacks.

October is Residents’ Rights Month, an annual event we celebrate every year in conjunction with the National Consumer Voice for Quality Long-Term Care. This year’s theme “Connection Matters” emphasizes the importance of connection to family, to friends, and to the community as an essential component of good health and quality of life for all people living in long term care.

During the pandemic, residents living in long term care still have a right to receive good care and services to obtain their highest level of well-being. Our MAS Ombudsmen are privileged to serve as advocates to help protect resident rights and resolve concerns brought forth by the residents.

I encourage community members to join in the Resident Rights month celebration and share this year’s theme “Connection Matters” by reaching out to people you know who live in long-term care through technology, mail, or window visits. Your creative connections help reduce social isolation and loneliness, empower residents and help to ensure quality of care, and quality of life.

Mary Dalton,
Certified Local Ombudsman & Friendly Visitor Program Supervisor
MAS Volunteer Earns Hospice Care Foundation Award

Congratulations to Senior Companion Gladys Miller for receiving the Hospice Care Foundation Honoring Our Heroes Award! The award recognizes and honors volunteers who make a difference in their communities by contributing their time and talents to hospice patients and their families.

Gladys has given 5761 hours to help older adults continue to live independently at home. Additionally, she also serves on the Senior Corps Task Force and has helped the Poverello Center, Boy Scouts, Cub Scouts and the students at Lowell School. MAS is so grateful for Gladys’ dedication to Missoula County!

Caring Companion Volunteer Goes Above and Beyond!

A special recognition is in order for one of our Caring Companion Program volunteers, Sandra Morrison-Paris. Caring Companion volunteers normally make regular visits to older adults, help with daily living tasks, and provide companionship.

The program usually has volunteers sign on for under a year, but Sandy has been a loyal volunteer with the same client for five years!

She truly goes above and beyond. Every week prior to the pandemic, Sandy traveled more than 20 miles from her home in Arlee to Missoula to spend time with her client. Now that her client is in Arizona, Sandy still travels into town to check on her client’s home and ensure that all is well.

Sandy has also volunteered for other MAS programs such as the Jewelry Sale and Senior Medicare Patrol, but it is her long-term commitment to the Caring Companion Program that really stands out. We wish to acknowledge this service and say a big “Thank you, Sandy!”
GIFTS IN MEMORY OF INDIVIDUALS

May - July 2020

John William Appelt
   Audrey Konie

Phil Bakke
   Glenn & Patty Camp

Gudrun Bednarczyk
   Dallas Bednarczyk

Mary Bielawski
   Susan Appelt

Thomas Brown
   Anonymous

Warren B. Carlson
   Michael Carlson

Florence Christiansen
   Gloria Hewitt

LaRaine Claar
   James Claar

Bob & Karma Cook
   Candy Cook-Drader

Bill Courser
   Patricia Courser

Linda Cronk
   Cameron Cronk

Walkter Crummy
   M Ione Crummy

Robert Danforth
   Dorothy Danforth

Midge Elander
   James Elander

Duane Gimbel
   Linda Jensen

Joe Hammond
   Karen Hammond

Elmer Hock
   Bob & Kimberly Murray

Les Jensen
   Linda Jensen

Audrey Kiserow
   David & Gerrie Diettrich

Paul Kiserow
   David & Gerrie Diettrich

Roger Kiserow
   David & Gerrie Diettrich

Ed Lahey
   Kathleen Kimble

Mark Laslovich
   Margaret Bossard

Butch Loftsgaarden
   Lois & Martin VanMil

Ora Mackie
   Marilyn Olivarez

Agatha Madison
   K. Jane Duncan
   Elizabeth Williams

Irene Harris Mandelko
   Marcia Harris-Mandelko

Vivian Marchie
   Melvin & Kathleen Lockridge

Rita Marcum
   Les Marcum

Penny Matheson
   Judy Bangert

Kathy May
   Janice & Raymond Anthony

Carol Meisinger
   Richard Meisinger

Ed Mulick
   Vicky Hammond & Richard Scharfe

Rod Newman
   Joan Newman

Irene Reese
   Deborah Pruitt
   Nina Tate

William L Schwanderer
   Marilyn Schwanderer

Don Steele
   Bill & Helen Evans
   Helen Steele
   Martha Tillemann

Bernard Thomas
   Dave Thomas

Zachariah Walker
   John & Annette Walker

Patrick Watson
   Ethel Byrnes
   John & Sharon Reiter

Jack Wehrenberg
   Richard & Mary Denise Giuliani

Gifts in Honor of Individuals
(May - July 2020)

Michael Allan Andrus
   Linda & Tom Andrus

Edie Cope
   Pam Gardiner
   Lyle Geurts

Adrienne Hopkins
   Anonymous

Kathryn Kimmet
   Anonymous

Susan Kohler
   Carolyn Abbott

Helen Pohlman
   Linda Jensen

Myrna Price
   Patti Perrin

Earl Reinsel
   Mark Reinsel

Evelyn Rice
   Bob & Kimberly Murray

Cathie Ross
   Carmen Corona

John Talbot
   Tom & Bonnie Lee

Patti Thomas
   Delores King
   Alan & Yvonne Rentmeister

Sue Vap
   Pam Gardiner & Lyle Geurts
MAS Offers Virtual Opportunities for Caregivers

MAS offers two virtual resources for caregivers through support groups and an evidence-based workshop.

Social distancing can contribute to feelings of isolation and loneliness. This is true for family caregivers and the loved ones they support. The Virtual Caregiver Support Group offers a safe place for caregivers to share experiences, advice and practical strategies for managing caregiver responsibilities. All caregivers welcome, including dementia caregivers. The evening support group meets the second Monday of every month from 4-5 pm. The second support group meets from 1-2 pm on the third Tuesday of each month. There's no cost, but please register on the MAS Eventbrite.com page.

Powerful Tools for Caregivers® is an evidence-based curriculum designed to help family and community caregivers learn to take better care of themselves and manage their stress while caring for a relative or friend. Research shows that the classes improve the self-care behavior, emotion management, and self-confidence of caregivers and connect them to more community resources.

Classes meet on Tuesdays, September 15 to October 20 from 2:30 - 4:30 pm. Participate online or by phone using Zoom. Space is limited. Pre-registration is required and is first come, first served. The cost is $30, or $50 for two people. No cost and reduced cost ticket options available. Please register at powerfultoolsmas.eventbrite.com or call MAS at 406-728-7682.
Major Donors (continued)

Linda Jensen
Barbara & Jim Jourdanna
June Lederer
Linda Lee
Mary Lewis
Tim Lien & Katharine Jones
John Lubbers
Edmond Magone
Dale & Sue Mahlum
Arthur & Jo Ann Mandell
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Les Marcum
Meals on Wheels America
Missoula Electric Cooperative
Muralt Family Foundation
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Barbara Noggle
Robert & Toni Ogg
Michael O'Leary
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Marge Savage
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The Loose Caboose LLC
Wells Fargo Foundation
Christopher Werni
Western MT Building & Construction Trades Council
Bob and LaWana Whaley

Thank You!

You Can Help Prevent the Spread of COVID-19

There are a few simple steps you can take to reduce your chances of becoming ill with COVID-19. Since the best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to the virus, it is important to understand how it spreads.

The virus is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person, especially when people are in close contact with one another. It travels through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs, sneezes or talks. These droplets can land on the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or simply be inhaled. Remember that people without symptoms may be able to spread virus.

The CDC recommends these four ways to reduce exposure:

• Cover your mouth and nose with a cloth face cover when around others. Wearing a cloth face covering will help protect people around you, including those at higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19.

• Avoid close contact with others who don’t live in your household.

• Wash your hands often, with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. This is especially important after being in a public place, or after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.

• Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces daily. This includes doorknobs, light switches and telephones.

Older adults and people who have underlying medical conditions may be at higher risk for developing serious complications from COVID-19. Please call your health care provider if you experience any of these symptoms: fever, cough, or shortness of breath. Other symptoms of COVID-19 are listed on the CDC website.

Together, we can slow the spread of COVID-19 in Missoula County!

#MaskUpMontana
**Staff News at MAS**

Missoula Aging Services is pleased to announce a new addition to our staff.

**TERESA SACKS** joins our staff as the Aging Mastery Program Facilitator. Since 2008 Teresa has been employed at the University Nevada, Reno. She has comprehensive experience in research, development, presenting and teaching. Currently, Teresa is an instructor of a web-based graduate and undergraduate course titled, “Aging and Addiction.” From 2001 to 2014 Teresa worked at Sanford Center for Aging in a variety of positions including Project Director, Health Research Analyst and Graduate Assistant. She has authored and co-authored several publications and manuals on topics of public health and gerontology. Teresa earned an Advance Graduate Certificate in Addiction Treatment and Prevention Services, a Master of Public Health, a Bachelor of Arts and holds a Gerontology Certificate.

We are looking forward to sharing Teresa’s expertise with MAS clients!

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**Have You Submitted Your Census?**

This is an especially important year to fill out the Census as it will decide if Montana gets a second Congressional seat, as well as determining how to distribute more than $675 billion in federal funds annually to states, counties, and communities to support infrastructure and vital resources such as schools, hospitals, and fire departments. The Census deadline has been extended to September 30, so please be sure to get counted and fill out your Census form today.

There’s no doubt COVID-19 has greatly impacted our lives and communities. It has also made it difficult for the Census Bureau to collect the critical census data needed to accurately reflect all the citizens in our state. There was a delay during the shutdown when Census takers were unable to go door-to-door to follow up with folks who are harder to count, such as rural residents who have no physical address.

If you haven’t already, filling out the Census only takes 10 minutes and it’s easy to do! Even as COVID-19 dominates the news, the Census Bureau’s letters should have already arrived in your mailbox. If you haven’t received a form, you can fill out your Census form online, based on your address. You can also fill it out and mail it in, or even complete it by phone. MAS can help you too!

The questions are simple: Who lives at your address, how old they are, their gender, their relationship to one another, their racial and ethnic background, and whether the property is owned or rented. It also asks for a phone number that can only be used for official questions from Census staff, and not for any other purpose. Though there’ve been rumors, the **Census form does NOT contain questions about citizenship status, health status, or income**. All information is completely private by law.
MAS Events

VIRTUAL CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUPS

EVENING GROUP
Second Monday of each month
4 - 5 pm
No Cost, Please register at https://caregiversupportmas.eventbrite.com

AFTERNOON GROUP
Third Tuesday of each month
1 - 2 pm
No Cost, Please register at https://caregiversupportmas2.eventbrite.com

AGING MASTERY PROGRAM
10 class workshop
No Cost
Join the waitlist by calling (406) 728-7682

VIRTUAL POWERFUL TOOLS FOR CAREGIVERS
Tuesday, September 15 - October 20
2:30 - 4:30 pm
$30 for one person or $50 for two people, Please register at https://powerfultoolsmas.eventbrite.com

VIRTUAL SUPPORT GROUP FOR RELATIVES RAISING CHILDREN
(Montana Kinship Navigator Program)
Third Wednesday of each month
12:30 - 1:30 pm
No Cost, Please register at https://bit.ly/304EErA

For a full event listing visit: www.missoulaagingservices.org