

A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF MISSOULA AGING SERVICES

2021 CONNECTIONS

WINTER

Helping Our Neighbors



As our community weathers the second year of the pandemic, we know this is not an easy time, but a time when acts of kindness make a real difference. It is so important for community members to help each other right now, and we sincerely thank you for joining with us to be there for local older adults.

I'd like to share a story of someone recently helped by Missoula Aging Services (MAS). When Linda returned home from the hospital after suffering a stroke, she faced the reality of recovering by herself in a rural town in Missoula County. It wasn't easy. Her legs were weak, and even with mobility aids, she experienced falls. She found difficulties managing her medications and cooking for herself. She even made the decision to stop driving.

Linda was worried that she wouldn't be able to keep living safely at home. She reached out to MAS, and a Care Manager met with Linda to create a plan to help her recover safely. Right away, Linda was able to start getting Meals on Wheels with safety checks from friendly volunteer drivers. Her Care Manager made her an appointment with a specialist to further support Linda's recovery.

With physical therapy, Linda began to rebuild her strength and balance. After several months, she felt safer again moving around her house, and no longer had episodes of confusion. Linda is recovering, but knows that she can reach out to MAS for support if needed.

MAS continues to provide expanded services to help older adults and caregivers during the pandemic. Your generosity has made a difference in the lives of real people. Now is the time of year your help is especially needed. Donations of any size to support our mission of promoting the independence, dignity and health of older adults are welcome. As always, contributions stay in Missoula County, where more than 130,000 meals were provided last year.

We truly value and appreciate your support.

Best wishes for a safe, happy holiday season,

Susan Kohler

Chief Executive Officer

WE'RE PROUD of OUR YEARS



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, Farmers Market Coupons, Liquid Nutrition (Ensure®), Community Lunches
- **Expert Assistance and Education:**
Call Center, Medicare & Medicaid Consultations, Resource Center Appointments, 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 Programs: RSVP, Foster Grandparents, Senior Companions, Caring Companions, Friendly Visitors, Meals on Wheels Volunteers
- **Safety and Advocacy:**
Montana Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP), Long-term Care Ombudsman Program, Money Management Services



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Missoula and Missoula County.

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In Perspective



Volunteerism is at the very heart of many programs at Missoula Aging Services (MAS). We are so fortunate to live in a community where people are willing to lend a hand to help those in need. Volunteers share their wisdom and experience, and give their time to serve others, especially when it matters most.

MAS is often the first stop for volunteers in Missoula County. We match volunteers with local volunteer opportunities that enhance their life. Last year, Rita Tucker came to Missoula Aging Services looking for her perfect volunteer opportunity.

Volunteer Services Coordinator Judy Douglas took the time to get to know her and suggested the Red Cross as a good fit. The organization trained her to support people who had just lost their home to a natural disaster. Last summer they asked Rita to deploy to the Polson, Crow and Busby Reservation fires. The people who came to the shelters had just driven away from their homes with an out-of-control fire in their rearview mirror. They were scared, stressed and had a deep need for information about the status of the fires. "The purpose of disaster relief is to give them a place where they can be safe until they figure out how to move forward. In shelters they get a short-term bed, shower and a safe place to be during a very stressful time," said Rita.

There were many evacuees there who couldn't stay with family or friends because their homes were in danger too. Some family groups included 3 generations. Grandparents took care of 20 grandkids at a time while the parents went to work. Rita helped the evacuees with food, personal care items, information, and a friendly ear. During the night, people were restless and couldn't sleep. They came to Rita for someone to talk to. Rita said what struck her most about her experience was the resilience of children and parents. "It was all down to Judy that I joined the Red Cross. It is really rewarding service," said Rita.

At Missoula Aging Services, we thank Rita for helping so many during the times they needed it the most! If you are looking for a way to contribute your skills to your community, we can help you find the volunteer opportunity that's right for you! For more information, call (406) 728-7682.

Adrienne Hopkins

Volunteer Services Coordinator

Memory Care Support Services

As the seasons change from fall to winter, I have been thinking about changes in the seasons of life. For most of us, getting older is inevitable and not a process for the faint of heart. There is a chance that you are watching a loved one go through new phases as well. You are not alone, it is estimated that within the next decade, 25% of Montana's population will be over the age of 60. At Missoula Aging Services, we are here to provide you and your loved ones with support and services as you navigate the ever-changing seasons of life.

One season many people go through involves challenges with memory and cognitive abilities. Occasional forgetfulness is normal and for some people it may increase as we get older. However, more serious memory issues such as Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias (ADRD) are much more complicated and not considered "normal" aging. Just like other diseases, early detection and evaluation are important. We estimate that there are 3,000 people in Missoula and Ravalli Counties living with ADRD, and most remain in their own homes.

To help support people living with memory issues, MAS is introducing Memory Care Support Services. These services are designed to help people continue to live in their homes with dignity and independence, and include assessment, personalized care planning, special support for family caregivers, and home modifications.

We hope that during the upcoming holiday season you will be able to spend time with family and friends, especially those older members of our community. If you are visiting with older friends and family and have any concerns, please encourage them to make an appointment with their physician.



A doctor can help distinguish between typical age-related changes, and symptoms of something more significant.

Talk to a doctor if you notice:

- Memory loss that disrupts daily life
- Frequently asking the same question or repeating the same story over and over
- Not recognizing familiar people and places
- Having trouble exercising judgment, such as knowing what to do in an emergency
- Changes in mood or behavior
- Vision problems
- Difficulty planning and carrying out tasks, such as following a recipe or keeping track of monthly bills

Memory Care Support Services are here to support families with helpful information and resources, whether or not a diagnosis has been made yet. This program is available to anyone living in Missoula and Ravalli counties. Call (406) 728-7682 for more information.

Russ Hill

Chief Operations Officer

GIFTS IN MEMORY OF INDIVIDUALS

August - October 2021

Patricia Blank

Richard Blank

Fred Bodholt

Rob & Sharon Holden

James D Busch

Clyde & Sharon Bush

Warren B. Carlson

Michael Carlson

Bob & Karma Cook

Candy Cook-Drader

Evie Cote

David & Gerrie Diettrich

Linda Cronk

Cameron Cronk

Virginia Duffner

Tim Duffner

Raymond Duffner

Tim Duffner

Vicki Johnson

Vereen Lang

Jim Flanders

Janet Flanders

MaryAnn Font

Mitchell & Barbara Royce

Orval 'Bill' Gastineau

Tony & Lynette Collier

Donna Gastineau

Carolyn Hart

Marilyn Trusty

Leone Harmon

Stan & Carol Wekkin

Patty Saylor

Harold Hochhalter

Sarah Askew

Ben Lawrence

Mary Alice Ocana

Iris McCampbell

Sylvia & David Edgell

Thelma McKinley

Virginia Williams

Carol Meisinger

Richard Meisinger

Brian Miller

Edward & Marifrances Courtney

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Linda Jensen

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Sheila & Guy Bonnard

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Richard & Ora Shrader

Teresa Beed

Mary Ann Valgenti

Anonymous

William Waugh

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Patty Zapp

John & Kathy Heffernan

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This year, you can also support
Meals on Wheels through
Subaru's Share the Love event.
Visit subaru.com/share-the-love
to learn more.

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August - October 2021

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

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Paul & Christine Kilzer

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Main Street Realty



New to Medicare? A class to answer questions!

“When I started the process of retirement and applying for social security and Medicare I was completely overwhelmed and felt like I had been dropped in the middle of the ocean, unable to even see land or know what direction to turn.” If this sounds familiar to you, Missoula Aging Services can help. MAS offers the class New to Medicare once per month, beginning in January.

Designed to help anyone make the most of their Medicare options, the class takes only 90 minutes, and is conveniently offered on Zoom. An opportunity for an individual follow-up Medicare consultation is provided to every participant.

“Within the first ten minutes of her walking me through the Medicare process I felt a tremendous sense of relief and spent the rest of the time filling out the form with her in my ear talking me through the process... it is so reassuring to know that we have such an amazingly efficient program to help people here in Missoula,” said one satisfied participant.

The class provides unbiased information, so you can choose the best plan for your needs, and it may even help you save money on prescription drugs.

Call (406) 728-7682 for more information or visit our website for details: MissoulaAgingServices.org

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August - October 2021

Dale & Millie Best

Carol Jobman

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Shirley McLaughlin

Don & Klairaine Nichwander

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Linda Jensen

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Matt Mellott

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Cynthia Rademacher

Renee Labrie-Shanks

Anonymous

Bryon & Colleen Smith

Dan Combo

Olga & Marvin Troutwine

Charles & Maggie Teague

Lifelong Connections:

Program grows to serve more communities in Missoula and Ravalli Counties

Missoula Aging Services (MAS) has expanded a program to connect older adults with online resources, family, and friends. Technology can address some of the challenges associated with social isolation during the pandemic, but many older people have limited access to computers or an internet connection. Others have outdated equipment without cameras or microphones, leaving them unable to take advantage of telehealth opportunities to stay connected to their physicians.

Over the last year, MAS has developed the Lifelong Connections program, to purchase wi-fi enabled tablets, train volunteers, and then match them with older adults ready to learn the basics of using email, Facetime, Zoom and other useful applications. Lifelong Connections has already empowered over 66 local residents to stay connected with family, take online classes, volunteer, and access telehealth appointments. The current goal of Lifelong Connections is to match 50 more older adults with technology and training in the community. The expanded program is now able to serve residents of the Seeley Swan Valley and Ravalli County.

The first 11 participants in the Lifelong Connections Program were Foster Grandparent and Senior Companion volunteers. Missoula Aging Services trained these volunteers, providing them with Samsung tablets with unlimited data services, and they were able to continue to serve as volunteers themselves. There have been so many success stories, like Grandma Rocky, who recieved her tablet on her 85th birthday. She has been able to set up weekly reading sessions with the preschoolers she normally volunteers to read to in person. Other recipients have called the program a “lifesaver”.

For information about this program or to support Lifelong Connections with a donation, visit MissoulaAgingServices.org or call (406) 728-7682.

This program was made possible by several generous donors, notably the Jane S. Heman Foundation and the May & Stanley Smith Charitable Trust.

In Memoriam

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

RSVP Volunteer
Doreen Miller



Staff News at MAS



ALLISON STREKAL is our new Development Director. She has an MBA from Western Governor's University and a Bachelor's in Journalism from the University of Nevada, Reno. Allison brings over 10 years of experience in non-profit development, fundraising, and event planning. Prior to MAS, she worked in development at the foundation for the largest not-for-profit hospital in northern Nevada. When not working, Allison enjoys hiking and being outdoors with her husband.

LENNA POCKLINGTON joined MAS in October as In-Home Support Services Supervisor. She comes with a strong background in caregiving and supporting people with disabilities. She has served as a job coach and most recently has worked directly with staff as a supervisor.

SHANA KLINGE joined us in October as our Nutrition Program Manager. Shana comes from the world of senior living and has been an administrator for over 10 years in addition to many years as an LPN and extensive work with people with dementia.

JAMES GLEIXNER joined MAS in September as our newest Care Manager. He has a Bachelor's Degree in Sociology from Northern Arizona University and a background in case management.

TAMMY SMOLA joined our PCA team in August. She has worked with older adults and is a Licensed Certified Nursing Assistant. We welcome her skills and talent!

Ways to Give: Missoula Aging Services

Missoula Aging Services is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization and is only able to fulfill its Mission with the support of local businesses, foundations and individuals like you. There are many ways to help, from donating online, to naming MAS in your will, or signing up to volunteer your time and experience.

We serve all people regardless of income and there are many who cannot afford to pay the full cost of our services.

Donations to Missoula Aging Services help your older neighbors receive Meals on Wheels, get advice on Medicare options or receive a break from caregiving duties. Programs like Memory Care Support Services allow older adults to live with dignity in their own homes, for as long as possible.

Donations to Missoula Aging Services are tax deductible. Support older adults in your community this holiday season by sending a check to MAS at 337 Stephens Avenue, Missoula, MT 59801.

You can also visit our 2021 Virtual Giving Tree online: MissoulaAgingServices.org



EST. 1982

MISSOULA *aging* SERVICES

WE'RE PROUD *of* OUR YEARS

337 Stephens Ave | Missoula, MT 59801

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Classes, Support Groups and Workshops

NEW TO MEDICARE: A VIRTUAL WORKSHOP

Thursday, January 6 from 12 - 1:30 pm

Tuesday, February 8 from 6 - 7:30 pm

Participate online using Zoom. \$20 or 2 for \$35.

No cost and reduced cost tickets available.

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

AGING MASTERY PROGRAM® (AN 11-WEEK VIRTUAL CLASS)

Mondays beginning January 3 from 10 am - 12 pm

Meets virtually on eleven Mondays. No cost for Montana residents thanks to the Jane S. Heman Foundation.

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

POWERFUL TOOLS FOR CAREGIVERS® (A 6-WEEK VIRTUAL CLASS)

Mondays beginning March 23 from 10 am - 12 pm

Meets virtually on six Mondays.

No cost for Montana residents thanks to the Jane S. Heman Foundation and UM-MTGEC.

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

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

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

Participate online or by phone using Zoom. **No cost.**

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

VIRTUAL CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUPS:

Second Mondays of each Month from 4 - 5 pm

Participate online or by phone using Zoom. **No cost.**

Register online: <https://bit.ly/3a9wn9X>

Third Tuesdays of each Month from 1 - 2 pm

Participate online or by phone using Zoom. **No cost.**

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

CALL MAS TO REGISTER (406)728-7682 BY PHONE. VIEW A FULL LIST OF EVENTS: MISSOULAAGINGSERVICES.ORG

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