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aging care connections

Your Source For Senior Care

Formerly Southwest Suburban
Center on Aging

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A MESSAGE FROM LOUISE STARMANN, DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL SERVICES

“Elder abuse doesn’t just happen to other people”... —William Mapother, Actor

Progress is being made in fighting elder abuse in our communities, but the problem is still tragically underreported and misunderstood.

Elder abuse happens in every town and village in our service area; nationally elder abuse is inflicted on millions of parents, relatives and neighbors across every state. Yet the problem is grossly underreported; it is estimated that only one in ten incidents of abuse is reported. Elder abuse can be physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, financial exploitation, confinement and/or emotional abuse. In many cases, several types of abuse are involved.

Aging Care Connections will receive an estimated 280 reports of abuse this year. Who are the victims? The average age of victims we have worked with over the past year is 79; our victims are 75% female and live in their own home. Most of the victims we work with have some type of impairment; they may be hearing impaired or have difficulty walking; 26% have some memory loss. Who are the abusers? The abusers we have worked with during this year are equally male and female. Nearly half of the abusers we have worked with are the children of their victims. The greatest common denominator among

abusers is their dependence on the victim for housing, income, emotional stability, etc. For the first time, Aging Care Connections has seen an increase in physical abuse allegations; 21% of our cases this year are reports of physical abuse.

These numbers may be surprising to many in terms of the sheer number of victims and their vulnerability. Aging Care Connections approaches each case recognizing first and foremost the dignity of the victim and the knowledge of how difficult it is to confront this issue for victims. Our elder abuse staff is highly skilled in working with these extremely sensitive issues and proceeds carefully with the victim’s consent to decrease the risk of further abuse to the victim. Our staff must see the victim in their home; the victim has the opportunity to speak alone and in the strictest confidence about their situations. Staff often encounter the abuser and may be able to work with an abuser to correct the situation by reducing stress, decreasing isolation or seeking

(...continued on page 2)

EARLY STAGE MEMORY LOSS SUPPORT GROUP

The Early Stage Memory Loss Support Group is an eight-week program designed for individuals diagnosed with early stage Alzheimer's disease or another dementia, and their family members and friends. Group sessions will offer participants the opportunity to explore what memory loss means to them and to learn ways to: cope with changes, maximize strengths, enhance communication, and plan for the future. The

groups provide education, emotional support, and social interaction in a safe and supportive environment. Participants will meet in two separate groups – those experiencing memory loss in one group, and family members/friends in another. Individuals will have the opportunity to give and receive support from those in situation similar to themselves.

DATE:

Wednesday afternoons
beginning in mid-September

REGISTRATION:

An interview is required
prior to registering. For
more information, contact
Ruth Folkening at
708-354-1323 x 28

LOCATION:

Aging Care Connections
111 W. Harris Avenue
La Grange, IL 60525

A MESSAGE FROM LOUISE STARMANN (...continued from page 1)

support for the abuser. In very high risk or dangerous situations, we will involve law enforcement and even the courts.

How can you help? ***Be an advocate for victims, break the silence and report any suspicions you may have concerning abuse.*** All reporters are protected from disclosure and retaliation by law. If you happen to know a person who has been a victim of abuse, offer support and understanding; victims of abuse are often blamed for their problem or considered unable to change, unable to live in their home, etc.

Finally, despite the seriousness of the problem, the State of Illinois has had to cut back on essential funding to assist with legal fees and court costs. ***Please call your legislator to express your support for the victims of abuse.*** The Elder Justice Act has passed both houses of Congress as a part of Health Care Reform but has yet to receive funding. ***Please advocate for victims by asking legislators to fund the Elder Justice Act.*** Finally, please help us to continue investigating and preventing elder abuse. ***We would very much appreciate your donation to support the services we offer to protect the frail, vulnerable older adults we serve. Thank you!***

EVENING CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUP

If you are interested in attending an evening support group for caregivers, please contact Ruth Folkening, the Caregiver Specialist at Aging Care Connections, at 708-354-1323, extension 28. A new caregiver support group will be formed if enough caregivers are interested in attending an evening group. Aging Care Connections has several active support groups for caregivers, but none of these groups meet in the evenings. Aging Care Connections recognizes that not all caregivers are available to attend a support group which meets during the day. We are committed to supporting all caregivers.



Introducing our Care Coordination Unit Supervisor Colleen Hill, AM, LSW

It is a pleasure to introduce Colleen Hill, Aging Care Connections' Care Coordination Unit Supervisor. Colleen is approaching her five-year anniversary with our organization including her one-year internship. She earned a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology and Sociology at DePaul University and a Master of Arts in Clinical Social Work with a concentration in Gerontology at the University of Chicago School of Social Service Administration.

In her position, Colleen supervises the Care Coordinators (formerly known as Case Managers), carries a caseload of clients, and serves as back-up Supervisor for the Elder Abuse Program. Comprehensive care coordination involves an assessment of the older adult's situation by a trained, experienced Aging Care Connections' care coordinator to consider factors such as physical, emotional, and financial needs, as well as strengths and support systems. The result is a care plan utilizing public and private resources, family support, and the older adult's preferences. The care coordinator assists with the implementation of the plan by making referrals and linkages to services. Continued coordination of services and ongoing care management are provided to ensure that services are adequate and appropriate to the changing needs of the older adult.

In addition, Colleen is a trained supervisor for the federal Medicare/ Medicaid initiative Money Follows the Person (MFP), "a system of flexible financing for long-term services and support that enables available funds to move with the individual to the most appropriate and preferred setting as the individual's needs and preferences change." Also under Colleen's supervision is our organization's participation in the Veterans' Independence Program (VIP) which "provides consumer-directed, home-based supports to help veterans at risk of nursing home placement stay in their homes." Our goal is to assist veterans in setting up more appropriate care plans in the community.

In her spare time, Colleen enjoys music and reading, in addition to spending time with her husband, Michael, and their dog, Reiley.

WELCOME, AGING WELL!

On May 1, 2010, Aging Well, a partnership representing 22 communities in the Lyons, Riverside and South Proviso Townships and comprised of hundreds of older adults and more than 130 community based-organizations, officially became a program of Aging Care Connections.

Six years ago, Aging Well was one of 16 partnerships created nationwide to receive a grant from The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation through its national program, Community Partnerships for Older Adults. The grant enabled the Aging Well project to engage in an 18-month planning process to develop a community-based, grass-roots strategic plan to help communities develop leadership, innovative solutions, and options to meet the needs of older adults in Lyons Township.

The integration of Aging Well with Aging Care Connections was undertaken to insure its viability and sustainability in the community after the funding through the

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation grant ended in April, 2010.

As a result of this integration, there was a need to merge the newsletters of each group in order to accommodate both the partners of Aging Well and our active Aging Care Connections' readers, while minimizing our printing and design expenses. This particular newsletter marks the first edition of our combined newsletter, incorporating an Aging Well section.

We are very pleased to welcome all Aging Well participants and hope you will enjoy the section of our newsletter devoted to Aging Well news.



AGING WELL COMMUNITY ACTION TEAMS ACTIVE THROUGH THE SUMMER

By Linda Hussey, Community Relations Coordinator

Although summer may be a time when most people kick back and relax, the Aging Well Community Action Teams (CATs) are busy planning and presenting exciting programs in their communities for the year. Aging Well is an Aging Care Connections' program which is a partnership representing 22 communities in the Lyons, Riverside and South Proviso Townships, comprised of hundreds of older adults and more than 130 community based-organizations. The program is focused on ensuring that our seniors age well! Here is a snapshot of some of the exciting things that are already in the works this year in our communities...

The Westchester CAT has planned an informative afternoon for July 28 at 1:00 p.m. for the community. Representatives from AARP and the Illinois Academy of Physicians will discuss how the recent health care changes will affect seniors.

The La Grange/La Grange Park CAT will participate in the La Grange Family Fest set for Friday, July 30. At the event, team members will answer questions and distribute infor-

mation about services for seniors. They will also share information about becoming part of this very active group.

The Hinsdale/Burr Ridge CAT will hold a program in October focusing on Housing Options for seniors. Because housing decisions often involve the adult children of seniors, this program will be presented during the day, and then again in the evening, so family members who work can receive the same information.

Finally, the Countryside CAT is in the initial planning phase for their annual "leaf raking" day. Groups from Countryside and surrounding areas come together one Saturday in November to help seniors collect and dispose of leaves on their property.

Community Action Teams always welcome new members! To learn more about any of the above mentioned activities, or to learn more about your local CAT, please call Linda Hussey, Community Relations Coordinator at Aging Care Connections (708)354-1323, extension 42.

AGING WELL HONORS VOLUNTEERS AND CELEBRATES INTEGRATION WITH AGING CARE CONNECTIONS

Aging Care Connections' Aging Well program recently held its annual meeting at the Riverside Golf Club. Three volunteers: Velaine Carnall, co-chair of the Countryside Community Action Team; Patricia Dime, co-leader of the Hodgkins/McCook Community Action Team; and Mark Zavagnin, vice president of student services and head football coach at St. Joseph High School who has created intergenerational opportunities for students and older adults to work together to address aging issues in Westchester, were recognized with distinguished Aging in Excellence awards for their substantial commitment to the partnership and the well-being of the community's aging population.

Ken Grunke, Director of Philanthropy and External Affairs at Aging Care Connections, highlighted the integration of Aging Well into the programs offered by Aging Care Connections and welcomed participants. Jim Durkan, President/CEO of the Community Memorial Foundation and Co-chair of the Aging Well Governing Council, spoke congratulating the attendees on the many ways they have cooperated to create communities where people can "age well." Debbie Vershelde, Executive Director of Aging Care Connections, concluded the evening by emphasizing how the commitment and hard work of Aging Well participants has helped and will continue to strengthen the community.

In reference to the integration of the Aging Well project with Aging Care Connections, she said, "By supporting Aging Care Connections and its Aging Well program, together we can ensure that a greater number of older adults and their families have access to quality long-term care and supportive services that meet their changing needs as they age, and that allow them to maintain their independence in the community."

A video showcasing the accomplishments of the Aging Well Community Action Teams since their inception was previewed. Some of the signature accomplishments were: the Lock Box program, which allows emergency personnel to have access to the homes of older adults; the creation of a resource directory for older adults in Hinsdale and Burr Ridge; and the walk for health program sponsored by La Grange/La Grange Park Community Action Team.

Formed in late 2001, volunteer-driven Community Action Teams have been working locally to create elder-friendly communities from the project's inception. In 2004, Aging Well received a grant from The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation through its national program, Community Partnerships for Older Adults. The grant enabled Aging Well to engage in an 18-month planning process to develop a community-based, grassroots strategic plan to expand and enhance long-term care and supportive services for older adults. These services include any assistance that provides older adults and their families with support to meet their changing needs as they age.

The integration of Aging Well with Aging Care Connections was undertaken to insure its viability and sustainability in the community after the funding through the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation grant ended in April, 2010. As Debbie Vershelde said, this integration is "a natural fit with Aging Care Connections. Our missions go hand in hand."



Pat Dime



Velaine Carnall



Mark Zavagnin

Holy Cow! What an Event!!!

Sports Ball 2010, our major fundraising event of the year, was held Friday, April 30 at Harry Caray's at The Westin, Lombard. We had the pleasure of welcoming 230 guests, the most in the nine-year history of our event, and netting close to \$50,000 to benefit the programs we offer to ensure the safety and independence of older adults in our community.

Paula Faris, sports reporter at NBC 5 Chicago, was our emcee for the evening and nine celebrity athletes added to the festivities: Kurt Becker, Dutchie Caray, Ella Chafee, Hope Chafee, Ken Geiger, John Kinsella, Ron Kittle, John Lattner, and Grant Mulvey. We are very grateful to our sponsors who made the evening possible.



Photos: ❶ Alec Parsons, Sports Ball 2010 Planning Committee; ❷ Susan Druffel, Sports Ball Planning Committee, and Tom Druffel with Clark the Goat courtesy of Jerry Burjan; ❸ John Lattner's Heisman Trophy auction package; ❹ Emcee Paula Faris of NBC 5 Chicago interviews Kurt Becker, 1985 Chicago Bears Super Bowl team member.



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WE GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGE
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REGULAR MONTHLY EVENTS

Alzheimer's Caregivers Support Group: A support group that meets the first Friday of the month from 11:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m. for caregivers of someone diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease.

Please contact: Intake Office, 708-354-1323, extension 15 for questions or to register.

Arthritis Exercise Class: A class that meets Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. for those with arthritis and those who want to keep their bodies limber.

*Instructors: Pat Michet and Shelley Anderson.
Fee: \$4.00 per class or \$32.00 for nine classes.
Please call: 708-354-1323 to register.*

Caregivers for Mentally Ill Adults: A support group that meets the first and third Wednesdays of the month from 10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. Group leaders: Cheryl Anderson and Christine Bumgardner.

Please contact: Christine Bumgardner, 708-354-1323, extension 34 for questions or to register.

Caregivers Support Group: “The Lunch Bunch” is a group of caregivers who chat over lunch. The group meets at Bakers Square Restaurant, 942 S. La Grange Road, La Grange, the first Thursday of the month at 11:30 a.m. Each participant pays for his or her lunch.

Please contact: Ruth Folkening, Caregiver Specialist, 708-354-1323, extension 28 for questions.

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Support

Group: A support group that meets the last Thursday of the month from 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. at the Summit Public Library, 6233 S. Archer Road, Summit.

Please contact: Ruth Folkening, Caregiver Specialist, 708-354-1323, extension 28.

Health Clinic: Dr. Nyaeme, a geriatric physician with Adventist Midwest Geriatric Specialists, sees patients Thursday mornings by appointment.

Please call: 708-245-4073 to make an appointment.

Legal Assistance: Attorney Erik Peck is available the second Wednesday of the month for consultation on matters pertaining to estate planning and legal issues. There is no fee for the consultation.

Please contact: Intake Office, 708-354-1323, extension 15 to make an appointment.

Memories—Gone But Not Forgotten: A group that meets the first Friday of the month from 11:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. for older adults experiencing early stages of memory loss who enjoy the company of others and reminiscing about “old times.”

Please contact: Intake Office, 708-354-1323, extension 15 to register.

Men's Support Group: The Friday Morning Regulars is a group of men that meets on Fridays at 9:00 a.m. to discuss issues related to aging.

Please contact: Intake Office at 708-354-1323, extension 15 for questions or to register.

Early Dementia Exercise: A six-week fitness program for those with early to mid-stage dementia and their caregivers offered in partnership with Right-Fit Sport Fitness Wellness, Willowbrook, that meets from 10:00 a.m. -10:45 a.m. on Friday. Cost for six-weeks is \$56 at the time of registration.

Please call: Ruth Folkening, Caregiver Specialist, 708-354-1323, extension 28, for questions or to register.

Monthly calendars will no longer be mailed. Please check with Aging Care Connections at 708-354-1323 if you have a question about a particular program or event. Thank you.

Communities Served

Bedford Park	La Grange
Bridgeview	La Grange Highlands
Broadview	La Grange Park
Brookfield	Lyons
Burr Ridge	McCook
Countryside	North Riverside
Hickory Hills	Riverside
Hinsdale	Summit Argo
Hodgkins	Westchester
Indian Head Park	Western Springs
Justice	Willow Springs

Aging Care Connections' Mission

.....to enrich the quality of life of older adults and their families through a range of programs and services that enhance their well being and independence



Leaving a Lasting Legacy to Aging Care Connections

Have you considered leaving a meaningful legacy for older adults by making a bequest to Aging Care Connections? When establishing or reviewing your will with your attorney, we hope you will consider Aging Care Connections as part of your charitable giving. Your gift will help us help thousands of older adults today and in the future. It's as simple as asking your attorney to include language in your will or trust as follows: "I bequeath the sum of \$ _____ or _____% of my estate to Aging Care Connections, La Grange, Illinois, to be used for the general support of the organization or as its Board of Directors deems appropriate."

For further information on how to leave a lasting legacy to Aging Care Connections, please contact Niki Chibucos, Director of Development and Public Relations at 708-354-1323, ext. 26.

Statement of Non-Discrimination

Aging Care Connections does not discriminate in admission to programs or treatment or employment in programs or activities in compliance with the Illinois Human Rights Act; the Age Discrimination in Employment Act; and the U.S. and Illinois Constitutions. If you feel you have been discriminated against, you have the right to file a complaint with the Illinois Department on Aging. For information, call Aging Care Connections at 708-354-1323.