



Summer 2024 Newsletter

In the Loop with Laurie	2	Upcoming Presentation: Alzheimer's	12
Upcoming Virtual Classes	3	Upcoming Presentation: Understanding Aging	
Older Americans Month	4-5	Brains and Ways to Improve Memory	13
Staff Updates	6-7	Empowered Caregiver Series	14
Seniors Guide to Fighting Fraud	8-9	Three Rivers: Living Well at Home	15
Winona Dementia Friendly Week	10	SEMAAA Staff & Board	16
Public Hearing Notice	11		

According to an article on the USAging website (www.usaging.org/caregivers), there are an estimated 53 million Americans that provide care for an older adult or someone living with a disability or illness. Family members are the primary provider of needed long-term care for their loved ones and are unpaid caregivers. Recent estimates indicate the value of unpaid caregiving has now reached over \$450 billion annually and continues to grow.



Research shows that approximately 90 percent of people aged 65 and older want to stay in their homes and communities for as long as possible. To accomplish this, many older adults rely on friends or family caregivers for needed support. Personally, I often do not identify myself as a caregiver and see it more like “doing what needs to be done for a loved one”. It is likely that a good share of the millions of unpaid caregivers don’t identify themselves as a caregiver but rather see their role falling under the catch all - doing everything necessary to keep family members living in their preferred living situation – at home. Being a caregiver can be stressful both emotionally and physically. Most caregivers have a routine, and things go well when that is dialed in without having any curveballs mixed in. The loved one that I care for (my husband) had a recent medical emergency and hospital stay. This unforeseen event kicked into gear what I believe to be one of the number one traits of caregivers – resiliency. For me, this means being able to bounce back from a tough situation and is reflected by how I adapt to the new stressors that pop up like uninvited guests. A combination of formal and informal support helps caregivers maintain their overall well-being.

Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) have a key role in connecting families to caregiving resources and agencies supporting caregiver services. SEMAAA administers Title III E Older Americans Act (OAA) caregiver support grants. Services such as caregiver information and assistance, support groups, caregiver respite, counseling, and caregiver education classes are offered by the six providers in our region.

For me, the best balance comes from connections to family and friends, passions such as collecting more Halloween decorations than one should be allowed to possess, playing baseball, dancing with kids and adults with disabilities, and a daily dose of humorous memes.



Laurie Brownell,

Executive Director
SEMAAA



Upcoming Virtual Classes

August 7th 12pm-1pm Medicare 101

Sponsored by MN River Area Agency on Aging - register at:
www.mnraaa.org/calendar/virtual-medicare-101-class-080724/

August 14th 10am-11:30am Protect Yourself from Fraud

Sponsored by Arrowhead Area Agency on Aging-register on Facebook:
www.facebook.com/events/1489817835209257/1489817888542585/

August 15th 8:30am-10:30 New to Medicare

Sponsored by MN River Area Agency on Aging - register at:
www.mnraaa.org/calendar/new-to-medicare-virtual-class-081524/

August 15th 2pm-4pm New to Medicare

Sponsored by Arrowhead Area Agency on Aging - register on Facebook:
www.facebook.com/arrowheadaaa/events

August 15th 2pm-4pm New to Medicare

Sponsored by Dancing Sky Area Agency on Aging - register at:
www.eventbrite.com/e/2024-senior-linkage-line-new-to-medicare-tickets-795573360337?aff=oddttdtcreator

September 10th 9am-11am Medicare 101

Sponsored by Central MN Area Agency on Aging - register at:
www.cmcoa.org/classes-assistance/

September 11th 10am-11:30 am and 2pm-3:30pm Protect Yourself from Fraud

Sponsored by Arrowhead Area Agency on Aging-register on Facebook:
www.facebook.com/arrowheadaaa/events

September 19th 2pm-4pm New to Medicare

Sponsored by Arrowhead Area Agency on Aging - register on Facebook:
www.facebook.com/arrowheadaaa/events

October 9th 10am-11:30am and 2pm-3:30pm Protect Yourself from Fraud

Sponsored by Arrowhead Area Agency on Aging - register on Facebook:
www.facebook.com/arrowheadaaa/events

COMING SOON: Medicare Open Enrollment - October 15th - December 7th
Medicare Updates 2025 Classes - call the Senior LinkAge Line at
800-333-2433 for upcoming classes once health plans release 2025 details.

Older Americans Month Activities

Every May, the Administration for Community Living (ACL) leads the nation's observance of **Older Americans Month (OAM)**, a time to recognize older Americans' contributions, highlight aging trends, and reaffirm commitments to serving the older adults in our communities. The 2024 theme was **Powered by Connection**, which recognizes the profound impact that meaningful relationships and social connections have on our health and well-being.

Local activities for Older Americans Month explored the vital role that connectedness plays in supporting independence and aging in place by combatting isolation, loneliness, and other issues.

Marie Hlava, SEMAAA's Board Treasurer, paved the way with multiple activities in Pine Island to help residents celebrate Older Americans Month.

Pictured Opposite:

Top left: Jeanne with her finished hat from clay class in Pine Island.

Top center: Pine Island Art instructor, Nicole Mentjes, admires Margo Bremer's vase while Nancy Wong finishes her bowl. Both women are residents of Evergreen Place in Pine Island.

Top right: OAM Storytelling. Participants used black and white photos to engage in active conversation without needing to remember anything!

Middle left: Nancy with her finished bowl.

Bottom left: Clay class participants with their instructor and student volunteers.

Bottom center: Jeanne Truestedt enjoying a conversation with Alexis Swintek, a Pine Island student who volunteered to assist with the class.

Middle and bottom right: May Day baskets in Pine Island with Marie Hlava, SEMAAA Board Treasurer.

Older Americans Month Activities



STAFF UPDATES



REHIRE: Jerry Roberts *SLL Resource Specialist*

SEMAAA is thrilled to have **Jerry Roberts** back as a Senior LinkAge Line resource specialist! Jerry worked at SEMAAA for 19 years before exploring other options for a bit. Jerry is an expert in many things and does an exceptional job helping callers with everything from Medicare to finding services. Jerry also enjoys getting out in the community to provide presentations. Jerry lives in Pine Island with his son and dog. In his free time, you may find him acting in a production at the REP Theatre, checking out a brewery, or enjoying a sporting event.

NEW ROLE: Nicole Cummings *SLL Resource Specialist*

The Senior LinkAge Line team would like to welcome **Nicole Cummings** as a new resource specialist. Nicole has been with SEMAAA almost five years, but previously worked as a preadmission screening specialist. Prior to joining SEMAAA, Nicole's background included child protection social work for the State of Iowa. She also worked with older adults teaching various fitness classes and promoting healthy living. Currently, Nicole is in the process of transitioning to her new role, and has been busy learning about Medicare, long term care options counseling, and all the other general topics required to work on the linkage line. She is excited to expand her knowledge to assist older adults. Nicole lives in Mankato with her husband and two teenage daughters. She enjoys spending time with her family and friends, cooking, gardening, traveling to new places, hiking, and being an active mom.



STAFF UPDATES



NEW HIRE: Tracie Kozak *Finance Assistant*

Tracie Kozak joined SEMAAA in May as the newest finance assistant. Prior to joining the team, her background included working as a managing partner in the restaurant industry for over 10 years as well as president for a specialty fire safety company for the last 12 years. Tracie is excited to expand her skill set and make the transition to the non-profit world where helping older adults is the primary focus. She is currently working on completing site visits to various nutritional providers and learning the financial reconciliation process as it relates to her new role. Tracie lives in St. Charles with her teenage daughter and son. She loves spending time at her son's sporting events (football, basketball, and baseball), watching the Packers, and traveling to new places whenever she can.

HAPPY RETIREMENT!

NEWLY RETIRED! Jone Trapp *SLL Resource Specialist*

Congratulations to **Jone Trapp** on her retirement! Jone was a Senior LinkAge Line specialist at SEMAAA for close to 11 years. Jone had a passion for Medicare counseling and did an excellent job teaching callers about Medicare and how to use medicare.gov. Jone's expertise and dedication to helping all callers will be missed. We are excited for her to be able to enjoy more time with her family, traveling to new destinations, and not having to wake up to an alarm clock!



Seniors Guide to Fighting Fraud

Fast Facts on Fraud

- Telemarketing fraud alone is a \$40 billion a year business.
- Although people in their twenties report being defrauded more often than people over 70, they tend to lose less money to the fraudsters than senior citizens.
- Scams and frauds conducted by mail, telephone, and computer are increasingly coming to you from other countries.

How to avoid scams

- Don't send money orders, prepaid cards, or gift cards to people you don't know. Legitimate companies and the government don't usually ask for payment this way.
- If a company tells you over the phone that your computer has a virus or needs protection, take your computer to a trusted computer repair shop.
- If you get a call or email claiming that a loved one needs emergency money, call the loved one before sending money in case the request is a scam.
- Don't give your personal information—including social security, credit card, or bank account numbers—to people you don't know who contact you, even if they claim to be with a company you know, like your bank.
- If your bank or credit card company calls you and asks you to confirm or provide personal information, like account numbers, social security numbers, or your date of birth, hang up and call the company back at a phone number you have obtained from a reputable source.
- Ask for written materials before you commit yourself to any sales offer.
- Before you send any money, check out the company and its offer with the Attorney General's Office and the Better Business Bureau.
- Walk away from a "deal" if you are being pressured to make an immediate decision.



Seniors are Targeted for Fraud

- It is hard to spot fraud when it is happening. The Federal Trade Commission estimates that consumers lose more than \$40 billion a year to telemarketing fraud alone. And, if you are an older consumer, you are a special target for those offering bogus prizes or selling bogus products and services.
- Most seniors grew up in an era when business was done on a handshake; unfortunately, crooks are playing on that trust. Imposters who pretend to be family members in need rely on senior citizens having family members that they love and want to protect.
- The economic consequences older Minnesotans face when defrauded are often devastating. Most seniors in Minnesota live on a fixed income and more than half of Social Security beneficiaries receive 50 percent or more of their income from Social Security. With fixed monthly pension or Social Security checks, it is nearly impossible to replenish bank accounts or money saved for retirement when it is taken by scams.
- Con artists use several methods to contact potential victims: phone, mail, door-to-door sales, and increasingly commonly by cell phone and computers. Some scams involve a combination of methods. For example, swindlers may generate leads by mailing or conducting a survey online to gauge interest in a product or service. Consumers who indicate interest are then contacted by telephone or email for a high-pressure sales pitch.
- Other scammers already have some of your personal information and pretend to be with a company you do business with in order to get more information. Once they get more information they can then open an account in your name and make unauthorized purchases.
- This guide identifies common scams that target Minnesota seniors, identifies the common warning signs of each scam, and provides information to help you thwart the con artists and protect your assets.

BEWARE: Common Scams



SENIOR LINKAGE LINE

- Scams can be large or small, sophisticated or simple, and come from next door or across the world. But the crooks behind them have two things in common. They want to steal your money and avoid being caught. Turn the tables on con artists behind them—don't fall for their tricks. Report these scams and their perpetrators to the Attorney General's Office.

Questions? Need help?

Call the Minnesota SeniorLinkage Line at 800-333-2433

Information courtesy of The Office of Minnesota Attorney General, Keith Ellison

Winona Dementia Friendly Community Week

Winona hosted its 5th annual Winona Dementia Friendly Community Week during the month of April 2024, which is a time to educate and inform the community about dementia and dementia-related resources and to provide support for people living with dementia and their care partners. This year featured a Caregiving 101 class, demonstrating basic skills to safely move, shower, and support someone needing mobility assistance and personal cares in the home. A Caregiver Social was held to connect caregivers and provide a network of support during the dementia caregiving journey. The week also featured a Dementia Friendly Open House and Art Walk at Benedictine-Winona – St. Anne Campus, which featured a resource fair, art by local artists, and the opportunity to participate in a free hearing screening and free cognitive screening. The equipment for hearing screening was purchased through the 2023-2024 Minnesota Board on Aging Dementia Grant. Many other activities happened during the week, including providing a Dementia Friends Information Session to over 70 youth in the upper grades at Winona's Riverway Learning Community Public Charter School as well as about 20 local youth and adults at our Winona East Recreation Center. Board Member Maria Hlava assisted with the youth Dementia Friends Information Sessions.

(Top) Senior Advocate Lori Paulson of the Winona Friendship Center visits with a resident during the Dementia Resource Fair in April as part of Winona Dementia Friendly Community Week. Attendees of the Resource Fair were able to gather information from local vendors and organizations and enjoy a performance by the Forget Me Notes - Winona's Dementia Friendly Choir.



(Bottom) The Forget Me Notes perform.



NOTICE

Request for Public Review & Comment on Proposal for Title III Program Development & Coordination Funding and Cost Sharing

In accordance with federal regulation, 45 CFR, Part 132.165, the Southeastern Minnesota Area Agency on Aging (SEMAAA) is allowed to submit a proposal to the Minnesota Board on Aging (MBA) to transfer III-B Supportive Services funds to the Area Plan administration for Program Development and Coordination activities that will have a direct and positive impact on the enhancement of services for older adults in the southeastern region of Minnesota. SEMAAA is required to make the details of such proposals available for public review and comment.

SEMAAA is proposing to use \$108,777 in Title III-B funds to support Program Development and Coordination Activities during 2025 as a cost of Area Plan administration. The MN Board on Aging allows up to 25% of these funds to be used for this purpose. The proposed amount represents 25% of the SEMAAA's new Title III-B direct service allotment.

In accordance with the Older American's Act, (Section 315(c) (1), the Southeastern Minnesota Area Agency on Aging (SEMAAA) is allowed to submit a proposal to the Minnesota Board on Aging (MBA) to use Title III funds for the purpose of providing supportive health promotion, and caregiver support services, and will employ a cost sharing strategy for allowable services to expand potential of Title III funding to support older individuals and their families in the eleven-county region of SE MN.

The Area Agency on Aging is required to solicit the views of older individuals, providers, and other stakeholders on the implementation of its cost sharing strategy for review and comment. SEMAAA is proposing to use approximately \$83,763 in Title III-E National Family Caregiver Support funds to pay for caregiver activities/services, \$162,136 in Title III-B funds to pay for supportive services, and \$36,246 in Title III-D funds to pay for health promotion, disease prevention programs in 2025 which are subject to cost sharing requirements.

Public Input - SEMAAA will be holding a public hearing on Monday, August 5, 2024, at 10:00 am regarding the Area Plan on Aging for fiscal year 2025-2028. This hearing will be held in person at SEMAAA - 2746 Superior Drive NW, Suite #300, Rochester, MN 55901 or virtually. Send RSVP to laurie@semaaa.org by August 2, 2024, to register your attendance and, if desired, your intent to speak at the hearing.

Written Comments - Written comments may be submitted; these will be accepted until August 9, 2024, please send written comments via email to laurie@semaaa.org or by mail to 2746 Superior Drive NW, Suite 300, Rochester, MN 55901.

ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE: WHAT IT IS AND WHAT CAN BE DONE



September 18, 2024

Presented by Joseph Gaugler, PhD



Dr. Gaugler is the Robert L. Kane Endowed Chair in Long-Term Care and Aging and a Professor at the University of Minnesota. His work focuses on the best way to support families and professionals who care for persons with memory loss. He aims to improve the health and well-being of carers through innovative programs and technologies.



Join us to learn how we can recognize, prepare and manage Alzheimer's Disease:

10:00am - 11:30am or 2:30pm - 4:00pm

Identical presentations at each. Free to attend, no registration required.

Location: Benedictine Living Community-
Rochester Madonna Towers
4001 19th Ave NW, Rochester, MN, 55901

Contact Ashley Millenbah, RLK Chair
Coordinator at mill8913@umn.edu
with any questions.

SCHOOL OF
PUBLIC HEALTH
UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA





Mayo Clinic Presents: Understanding Aging Brains and Ways to Improve Memory

1:00 - 3:00 pm, Monday, August 5th, 2024 at 125 Live

Join Angela Lunde, M.A., Associate in Neurology at Mayo Clinic for an informative and engaging session on brain health. Angela will discuss what brain changes are normal for older adults and what changes may be cause for concern. She will highlight what the latest research is uncovering about preventing or delaying symptoms of dementia. In addition, she will engage attendees in ways to minimize age-related changes and improve everyday memory function.



Register by August 4th by visiting **125livemn.org** and clicking Activity Registration.

Empowered Caregiver Series

Caring for a person with dementia is challenging. This series of no-cost classes for caregivers are designed to provide helpful tools and reduce stress.

A two-day virtual community offering



Tuesday, August 20, 2024
8:30 a.m. - 12 p.m. CDT

Building Foundations of Caregiving

This class explores the role of the caregiver and the changes they may experience. Participants will learn how to build a support team and ways to manage caregiver stress.

Communicating Effectively

Learn how dementia affects communication and ways to communicate well with the person living with dementia, as well as family, friends and health care professionals.

Wednesday, August 21, 2024
8:30 a.m. - 12 p.m. CDT

Responding to Dementia-Related Behaviors

Dementia can cause changes in a person's behavior, including how a person communicates. Learn about the possible reasons for behaviors and ways to address them, including non-medical and medical approaches. You'll also learn to recognize when additional help is needed.

Supporting Independence

Helping a person living with dementia participate in daily activities is important. Care partners will discover the right amount of support, and how to balance safety and independence while managing expectations.

PRESENTERS

JULIE PRASKA-MOSER, CMC
Program Manager
Alzheimer's Association Minnesota-North Dakota

JOAN DANKS
North Dakota Program Director
Alzheimer's Association Minnesota-North Dakota

Participants may register for
one or both days

Register Online

bit.ly/AlzEC



This project is supported by funding through the North Dakota Department of Health & Human Services, Aging Services Section

24/7 Helpline 800.272.3900

alz.org/mnnd

Living Well at Home

*David Kujawa, Volunteer Coordinator,
Three Rivers Community Action*

It can be difficult asking for help. The act itself puts one in a vulnerable position of saying “I can’t do it alone”. For many older adults in rural communities in Goodhue County, reaching out for help is a milestone in lives littered with milestones. Many can see all that needs to be done in their homes, or yards, and have had to admit they are not physically able to do it alone. It’s an intimidating prospect to put your needs in the hands of someone else, especially when you do not know who you can turn to. In large urban communities there may be a great variety of options for professional services but in our rural communities many of those options are out of reach for older adults struggling. Either the distance is too great or the price is too high.

In Fall of 2023, Three Rivers Community Action received a Live Well at Home grant from the MN Department of Human Services to help connect community volunteers with older adults in need across our Goodhue County communities. The program is designed to help older adults with chores and homemaker services like dog walking, vacuuming, laundry, and yard work. It started with the Zumbrota-Mazeppa football team raking leaves and cleaning yards before winter came. Nineteen football players went out to homes of older adults in Zumbrota and Mazeppa and completed 15 volunteer hours one cold day in November. This effort showed that rural communities are ready to respond. Small starts can lead to big things.

At the beginning of 2024, Three Rivers launched a new volunteer website and database to help close

the gap between volunteers wanting to help, and older adults who ask for help. Through this database, whenever an older adult asks for assistance, their needs are posted and shared with all Three Rivers volunteers in their community automatically. Soon, through presentations to local organizations, government bodies, and clubs, word began to spread. Volunteers came to sign up to help. The needs may seem small to some; vacuuming for 30 minutes every 2 weeks, or watering flowerpots every other day depending on rain. But for an older adult who might feel isolated, this act can feel like arms wrapped around them in community.

As 2024 winds on, the program is growing every single week. For their chore and homemaker programs, Three Rivers gained 22 new volunteers between January and July, logged over 100 volunteer hours completed, and partnered with 2 new community organizations. There is still more to come. The Three Rivers Older Adult Services staff are already working on expanding their services to include Respite care for caregivers in these rural communities, and partnering with Elder Network to build a program that lasts. Every day is a new effort to reach more of those in need and to make a bigger impact for the benefit of the communities we serve.

If you or someone you know in Goodhue County needs help, feel free to contact David Kujawa at Three Rivers Community Action, (507) 321-0404.

ThreeRivers
COMMUNITY ACTION



People-focused, community-driven

SEMAAA Board

Jean Eaton, *Chair* - Freeborn County
Dave Vandergon, *Vice Chair* - Goodhue County
Marie Hlava, *Treasurer* - Member At-Large
Mike Hancock, *Secretary* - Olmsted County
Marjorie Fuller - Fillmore County
Linda McPeak - Houston County
Jenelle Cummings - Mower County
David Beimers - Rice County
Karen Hanson - Winona County
Rachel Boyum - Member At-Large
Maggie Cook - Member At-Large
Dwight Jennings - Member At-Large
OPEN - Dodge County
OPEN - Steele County
OPEN - Wabasha County

Congratulations!

On behalf of the SEMAAA Staff and Board, Congratulations to Reena Shetty, recently named Division Director for Aging and Adult Services and the Executive Director of the Minnesota Board on Aging. We look forward to working with you and your team!

SEMAAA Staff

Laurie Brownell - Executive Director
Anna Thomson - Office Manager
Kim Voth - Finance Director/Grants Manager
Patti Schad - Finance Assistant
Tracie Kozak - Finance Assistant
Laurie Marreel - Grants Administrator
Dan Conway - Lead Eldercare Developer
Chris Johnson - Eldercare Developer
Annie Avery - SLL Contact Center Manager
Nicole Cummings - SLL Resource Specialist
Starla Inman - SLL Resource Specialist
Tambi Lokken - SLL Resource Specialist
Laurie Magnus - SLL Resource Specialist
Jerry Roberts - SLL Resource Specialist
Chad Wojchik - SLL Resource Specialist
Amy White - SLL Resource Specialist
Lori Wacek - SLL Resource Coordination Supervisor
Jay Hall - SLL Resource Coordinator
Sara Kohrs - SLL Resource Coordinator
Emily Krowiorz - SLL Resource Coordinator
Jen McLaughlin - SLL Resource Coordinator
Claudia Bell - APS Community Coordinator