



Florida Association of Aging Services Providers e-Newsletter

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Guest Editor: John Clark, Council on Aging of West Florida, Inc.

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THIS ISSUE SPONSORED BY:



Message from the President

by Karen Deigl, Senior Resource Association, Inc.

Dear FASP Members:

During the last several years our FASP network members have persistently and arduously developed relationships and communicated to elected officials about the needs of our frail seniors.

I would like this opportunity to recognize a few of our FASP members who this year have gone above and beyond the call of their daily busy lives to ensure that the decision making elected officials understand how the Home and Community Care Programs reduce long term care costs.

I applaud **Jim Croteau** of Elder Care Services, Tallahassee, **Janice Wise** of the Area Agency on Aging for North Florida, **Barbara Kauffman** of Council on Aging of Martin County, **Sheila Salyer** & her Assistant Director **Hella Spellman** of the Tallahassee Senior Center, **Elizabeth Lugo** of The Volen Center, Boca Raton, **Jaime Estremera-Fitzgerald** of Your Area Aging Resource Center, West Palm Beach,

Robert Beck of PinPoint Results, **John Clark**, Council on Aging of West Florida, **Bill Aycrigg** of CARES of Pasco County and lastly, **Margaret Lynn Duggar & Associates**. I wish to especially thank John Clark for the following article that he wrote to encourage all of us to get involved.

Sincerely,
Karen Deigl

How to Make a Difference by John Clark

We are indeed blessed to live in a country where we are free to express ourselves, elect our leaders, worship as we choose, read what we want, and "petition" our government. It might be easy to say my vote doesn't count or my wishes don't matter, however, history proves that to be incorrect. Our votes do count and our voices do matter.

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Future of Medicare and Social Security by John Clark, Guest Editor

In the coming months, one topic that will be on the “front burner” of every politician and policy maker at the national level will be “fixing” and/or “reforming” Social Security and Medicare. Among the things you will hear regarding Social Security will be: privatizing the system, increasing the retirement age, changing the way cost of living adjustments are figured, raising the income limits for working persons on contributions to Social Security and/or means testing (limiting it to low income people). With Medicare reform there will be talk about “turning it over” to the private sector, increasing premiums, increasing co-pays, increasing the contributions made by working people, raising the eligibility age and reducing payments to health care providers, which would result in less access to services.

No single program has done more to lift hundreds of millions of elder citizens out of poverty than Social Security. It is hard today for us to imagine what it was like for people 65 and older before 1935, the year Social Security was enacted into law. For millions it meant working until death, because many had no “pensions.” It meant having to depend on the generosity of others, often family, many of whom were getting by day to day. Families did, as most do today, step up to the plate to care for their loved ones. But the passage of Social Security meant, for the first time, that every American would at least have a small “guaranteed” income for as long as they lived.



Today, Social Security is the major source of income for most elderly citizens. According to the Social Security Administration, it accounts for 41% of the income of the elderly. 43% of unmarried persons and 22% of married couples rely on Social Security for 90% of their income. Nine out of ten individuals age 65 and over receive Social Security benefits. It is a vital part of the “safety net” for the majority of senior citizens.

The problems began when Social Security was expanded to cover those who became disabled, the children of a deceased worker and the spouse of a worker. It is also true that when Social Security became law, life expectancy for all Americans was only 61.7 years old! Fortunately, the average life expectancy today for Americans is 78.3. Along with a declining birth rate and fewer workers to support those on Social Security, it is clear why there is such a strain on the system.

At the same time, while Medicare was enacted into law in 1965, it too has run up against some serious financial problems. These are also the result of an increased life expectancy, but also an increase in the cost of medical care and expanded coverage to include disabled workers. However, the “fixes” that might be made to both Social Security and Medicare are inextricably bound. Why is this so?

According to an article by Ken Schwartz of the National Council on Aging (NCOA), new poverty rates released by the U.S Census Bureau show an alarming increase in the poverty rate for senior citizens, nearly doubling to 15.9%. Why is this happening? According to the article, “the criteria by which poverty is measured was expanded for this study to include a more accurate reflection of a person’s overall economic needs and vulnerability, including out of pocket health care costs.” Swartz goes on to note that “in 2009 Medicare households spent three times more on health expenses (14.9%) than non Medicare households (4.8%).” This includes such things as Medicare premiums, deductibles, co-pays, supplemental Medicare policies and increasing drug costs. Swartz noted that this health care expenditure by seniors

is projected to reach 26% in 2020, according to a Kaiser Family Foundation study. What does this mean? It means that when you factor in what a senior citizen spends on health care and deduct that from their income, their poverty rate rises significantly for many seniors. It should be clear to anyone, that further increasing premiums and deductibles, decreasing Social Security payments, or any combination of these events, could have disastrous results for millions of senior citizens who depend on these two critical entitlement programs. Those changes will push them into poverty.



Continued on Page 3

Continued from Page 1—How to Make a Difference

However, if we fail to vote and fail to let our voices be heard, then we have not only failed ourselves, but our country, our fellow citizens and, above all, those elders we purport to serve. Elected officials, at all levels of government, deserve our thanks for their willingness to “step up to the plate” and offer themselves to public service. It is not an easy task and few are willing to take on the challenges. They are often torn between (and among) competing priorities, all of which may have great merit. They have many citizens making many demands on them for their time, their action, and their vote on an item of concern.

However, elected officials want, **and need**, to hear from their constituents. If there is “thundering silence” it is impossible for them to know your feelings on issues of importance. And there are many areas of concern today, especially for the elder population. There are issues on the national level, such as Medicare, Social Security, the high cost of medicine, and much more. In Florida there are concerns over funding for home and community based services such as Meals on Wheels and Respite Care. However, thanks to our legislators and to a lot of advocacy work by many people, who see the importance and cost effectiveness of funding in home care for elders versus institutional care, there have been no cuts to programs for in-home elder care in the past two years and this year there are currently no proposed cuts.



At the same time, the aging network has been struggling to deal with the background screening legislation passed two years ago. That legislation required fingerprinting of all our staff and volunteers having any contact with a client being served by a Department of Elder Affairs funded program. This year, again, thanks to many people, we have seen legislation introduced which will “correct” some of the problems that providers have encountered in implementing this legislation. These proposed changes would not have been possible were it not for the many advocates in the network and legislators who understood the problem and were willing to introduce legislation to correct them.

But it's not over yet. Everyone must continue to let their elected officials know the importance of funding for in-home services and of correcting well intended legislation (background screening) so that it does not interfere with recruiting of volunteers and place an undue funding burden on providers at the expense of service delivery.

Finally, don't hesitate to contact those who are running for elected office and let them know how you feel about issues and/or funding for eldercare services. Ask them what their position is on funding for critically important services such as Meals on Wheels and adult day care. Remember; above all, exercise your privilege and **VOTE!** One person can, and often does, make a difference.

Who is My Legislator? Look at your voter registration card, which shows the numbers of your House and Senate voting districts or you may find this information through the web site of your County Supervisor of Elections: <http://election.dos.state.fl.us/contact-us/contact-elected-officials.shtml>



Continued from Page 2—Future of Medicare and Social Security

Those of us who want to see these programs preserved for the current generation and future generations understand that systemic changes will ultimately have to be made to both programs. But we also know what these programs have meant, and continue to mean, to millions of senior citizens; a lifeline, preserving a quality of life that provides millions with the most basic necessities; a guaranteed income and access to quality health care. I have tried to point out in this article what some of the problems are and how they have happened over the years.

No, I am not offering you any answers. Sorry, folks; that is the job of people far above my pay grade. If the President, Congress, the “Super Committee” cannot arrive at solutions to these problems; don't expect me to give you an answer. What I would hope and ask for is that our elected officials and policy makers who are of good faith will keep in mind the millions of senior citizens of modest and little means for whom these two entitlement programs are a lifeline and which are often the difference between a very modest quality of life and going off the cliff into poverty. Don't be afraid to make your voice heard. Trust me, the special interest lobbyists will be heard, so you must make your opinion heard by those making these decisions.

Recognize a Valuable Service Employee You Know with a FASP Award!

The FASP Awards Committee has begun accepting nominations for the 2012 Minotty Eye Foundation Best Direct Service Employee of the Year.



The deadline for submissions is **Wednesday, May 16, 2012**.

FASP Members are encouraged to nominate a Florida aging service employee who has:

- added value to the service being delivered that has benefited the elders served;
- gone above and beyond job requirements to provide customer service and ensure customer satisfaction;
- developed community resources and support to the services being provided; and demonstrated a high level of commitment to excellence.



The Minotty Eye Foundation Best Direct Service Employee of the Year Award acknowledges an employee who makes a difference in the lives of seniors individually or through a unit, group, agency or organization.

Due to the generosity of the Minotty Eye Foundation's sponsorship, the Award winner will receive complimentary registration on Tuesday, August 21st to receive their award which includes **\$500.00 for themselves and \$500.00 for their agency**.

Each year, FASP presents this award during the Florida Conference on Aging to honor the dedication of Florida service employees. The 2012 Florida Conference on Aging will be held August 20-22, at the Grande Lakes Ritz-Carlton – Orlando, Florida.

Nominations can be submitted online at www.fasp.net. If you have any questions, please contact more-info@fasp.net or call (850) 222-2575.



Mark your calendars now!

*The 2012 Florida Conference on Aging
will be held
August 20-22, 2012
at the Grande Lakes Ritz-Carlton
in Orlando*



Sponsor & Exhibitor Brochure

Exhibitor Registration is open

National Campaign to Connect Eligible Americans with Free and Low-cost Resources



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New Report Finds Millions of Low Income Older Adults Are Missing Out on Help with Their Health Care, Prescription, Food, and Utility Costs

Washington, D.C. (February 14, 2012) – A report released today by the National Council on Aging (NCOA) and the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging (n4a) finds that millions of Americans are missing out on over \$20 billion in free and low-cost support that is available to help pay for health care, prescriptions, food, and utilities.

Ironically, the report, *The Senior Disconnect: Millions Losing Out on Billions in Benefits*, also finds that the number one reason caregivers and older adults call the Eldercare Locator, a nationwide service that connects people to senior services, is to see if support is available in their communities.

NCOA and n4a have launched a national campaign to connect eligible Americans with free and low-cost resources that are available to help them with everything from paying heating bills, getting food assistance, accessing disaster relief, and receiving financial assistance for health care.

“Millions of low-income Americans who are struggling to make ends meet are missing out on billions of dollars of services and benefits that can help them,” said James Firman, President and CEO of NCOA. “As a result, we are launching a national campaign to educate older adults about the support that is available – and the steps they need to take to get signed up.”

The *You Gave, Now Save* campaign directs the public to two simple resources that can help people connect with potential support.

NCOA’s BenefitsCheckUp® (www.benefitscheckup.org) is a free, comprehensive online screening tool that contains over 2,000 public and private programs for low-income people with Medicare.



The Eldercare Locator, a public service of the U.S. Administration on Aging, (available toll-free 1-800-677-1116 and online www.eldercare.gov) connects older adults and their families to local agencies and organizations that can assist them with applying for support from a variety of programs.

“As the baby boomer generation matures, the aging population in America is growing and it is critical to make sure older adults are aware of the services available to help them remain living independently in their homes and communities,” said Kathy Greenlee, Assistant Secretary for Aging. “There are many effective low-cost and no-cost services available and through the *You Gave, Now Save* campaign, we hope many more eligible seniors will start to benefit from them.”

“It is no secret that millions and millions of Americans are struggling right now, but help is just a phone call away,” said Sandy Markwood, CEO of n4a. “The aging network is coming together to do everything we can to communicate with older adults and caregivers who demand these services, and let them know that support is available. This campaign is about connecting those in need with the support that is right at their fingertips.”

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Florida Department of Health Announces New Deputy Secretary

CONTACT: Office of Communications,
Jessica Hammonds, (850) 245-4111

TALLAHASSEE – State Surgeon General Dr. H. Frank Farmer, Jr., MD, PhD, FACP announced Kristina Wiggins as new Deputy Secretary for the Florida Department of Health (DOH), effective immediately. Ms. Wiggins will oversee the Office of Legislative Planning and the divisions of Children Medical Services, Information Technology, Disability Determinations, Medical Quality Assurance, Administration and Health Access and Tobacco.

“I am looking forward to working with Ms. Wiggins, as her experience will be a valuable asset to the Department.” “Her management experience and an acute understanding of the Legislative process will be useful as we continue to seek ways to meet the health needs of Floridians and visitors and provide unique and quality health programs statewide.”

Wiggins brings with her thirteen years in state government and has experience in diverse roles throughout her career that will allow her to lead various DOH programs. She most recently served as Legislative Analyst for the Florida Senate Environmental Preservation and Conservation Committee starting in 2009 where she strategized with senators, agency directors and staff to draft bills and amendments, and maintained knowledge of dynamic issues for the committee.

She served as Senior Legislative Analyst for the Florida Public Service Commission, Legislative Analyst for the Committee on Domestic Security and Energy for the Florida House of Representatives, Director of the Reading Endorsement Program for Florida State University and Program Specialist for the Florida Department of Education. Wiggins worked as a Fiscal Supervisor for the Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services. While at the Florida Department of Education and in Ohio, she concentrated on developing relationships, growing business and managing county budgets. She has a M.P.A. in Public Administration and a B.A. in Literature from the University of North Florida.

Lucy Gee, Director of the Division of Quality Assurance, has been serving as Interim Deputy Secretary. The Florida Department of Health’s mission is to protect and promote the health of residents and visitors in the state through organized state and community efforts, including cooperative agreements with counties. For more information, visit www.floridashealth.com.

Continued from Page 5—National Campaign to Connect Eligible Americans...

Key findings from the report include:

In 2011 alone, BenefitsCheckUp® screenings identified over \$1.2 billion in benefits that users may be eligible to receive, but are currently not getting.

71% of all BenefitsCheckUp® users were missing out on benefits they were potentially eligible to receive.

“Financial benefits” is the number one reason people call the Eldercare Locator.

To view the complete report released today, or to learn more about the *You Gave, Now Save* campaign, visit www.aoa.gov or www.facebook.com/yougavenowsave.

A Summary of the Report on the Medicaid Long-Term Care Proposed Changes for Florida

Florida's Winter Park Health Foundation and Jessie Ball DuPont Fund worked together on contracting with the Health Care Policy Institute of Georgetown University to assess Florida's plans for Medicaid Reform, passed on the 2011 Legislative Session.



The report focuses on the following questions about Florida's proposed Medicaid changes, with particular attention to the Medicaid Long Term Care Program:

- a) Time and resources allocated for program implementation may not be sufficient to accomplish the goals set for the program and particularly to assure smooth transitions for a very vulnerable population.
- b) The popular goal of shifting services from institutional to community-based settings may be difficult to accomplish given certain program design features.
- c) Independent sources of information and counseling for consumers as well as strong independent oversight of plans will be essential. These program elements need to be strengthened.
- d) The potential impact of the proposal on costs is unclear.

Specific goals of the Long-Term Care Managed program, according to the Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA), are:

- a) Access to cost-effective community-based long-term care services;
- b) Coordinated long-term care across different health care settings;
- c) Long term care plans with the ability to offer more services;
- d) A choice of the best long-term care plans for program participants' needs.

The Report was presented at a recent meeting in Tallahassee where FASP Past President Terri Barton of Aging True in Jacksonville was one of the prestigious panelists.

The full report from Georgetown University Health Policy Institute and a very informative outline from AHCA can be accessed through these links:

[AHCA's Florida Long-Term Care Managed Care Program: Program Overview](#)

[The Jessie Ball duPont Fund and the Winter Park Health Foundation policy brief from researchers at the Georgetown Health Policy Institute.](#)



Voter Information

Voter Responsibilities

Each registered voter in this state should:

1. Familiarize herself or himself with the candidates and issues.
2. Maintain with the office of the Supervisor of Elections a current address.
3. Know the location of her or his polling place and its hours of operation.
4. Bring proper identification to the polling station.
5. Familiarize herself or himself with the operation of the voting equipment in his or her precinct.
6. Treat precinct workers with courtesy.
7. Respect the privacy of other voters.
8. Report any problems or violations of Election laws to the Supervisor of Elections.
9. Ask questions, if needed.
10. Make sure that her or his completed ballot is correct before leaving the polling station.

Keep Your Voter Information Up-to-date

[Address Change](#)

[Party Change](#)

[Name Change](#)

[Signature Update](#)



All can be done quickly prior to an Election and save you time when voting.

Please remind senior citizens whose signatures may have changed due to aging, health or other issues to update their voter registration signatures. Signatures that do not match those on file can render absentee ballots invalid. Voters may update signatures by requesting an application by calling their Supervisor of Elections Office. Click the following link to locate your Supervisor of Elections office.

http://election.dos.state.fl.us/SOE/supervisor_elections.shtml

Save the Date: National Summit on Nutrition and Aging—August 23, 2012

In celebration of the 40th Anniversary of the inclusion of Senior Nutrition Programs in the Older Americans Act, the AoA-MOWAA National Resource Center on Nutrition and Aging will host a National Summit on August 23, 2012 at the Gaylord National Hotel and Convention Center near Washington, DC.

The National Summit will provide a unique opportunity to bring together a broad array of thinkers and doers – representatives from all levels of the aging network, as well as policymakers, leaders of other national organizations with an interest in nutrition and wellness, scholars and the general public – for a day of celebration, reflection and future-building.

While the Summit will begin with a retrospective that honors past successes and the people and programs responsible for achieving them, the focus will be on creating a plan for the next 40 years. Building the future will involve collaboration and innovation and courage. It should involve you and your organization. So, save the date!

What: Perspectives on Nutrition and Aging: A National Summit

Why: To celebrate 40 years of success and ensure 40 more

When: August 23, 2012

Where: Gaylord National Hotel and Convention Center, 201 Waterfront Street, National Harbor, MD 20745

Upcoming Events



March 2012

March 22, 2012: Deerfield Beach/Boca Raton, FL. Advances in Geriatrics—Life in the 3rd Third: Understanding the Oldest Elders (Earn up to 7 CEUs/CME) Call 305-355-9123 or visit <http://www.miami.edu/magec/events.html> for more information.

March 28-April 3, 2012: Washington, DC American Society on Aging Conference. Aging in America. For additional information and to register, visit <http://asaging.org/general-info>

April 2012

April 19-22, 2012: Nashville Downtown Hotel, Nashville, Tennessee. Southern Gerontological Society Conference. *Gerontology: A Legacy of Commitment*. For additional information please visit <http://www.southerngerontologicalsociety.org/sgs/index.asp>

May 2012

May 20-23, 2012: New Orleans, LA. AIRS Conferences. For additional information please visit <http://www.airs.org/i4a/pages/index.cfm?pageid=3385>

June 2012

June 11-14, 2012: Washington, DC. Annual Conference on Independent Living. For additional information please visit <http://www.ncil.org/conference/2012RFP.html>

July 2012

July 7-11, 2012: Denver, CO. National Association of Area Agencies on Aging Conference. For additional information please visit <http://www.n4a.org/training-events/annual-conference/>

July 22-23, 2012: Washington, DC. National Association of Social Workers National Conference. For additional information please visit <http://www.socialworkers.org/nasw/conferences/hope2012/default.asp>

August 2012

August 20-22, 2012: Grande Lakes Ritz Carlton, Orlando, FL. Florida Conference on Aging. For more information please call 850-222-8877 or visit www.fcoa.org



Come visit us at the FASP website www.fasp.net



FASP is on Facebook - Are You?

Do you or does your organization have a Facebook or Twitter account?
We would love to "like" "Friend" and/or "follow" you too.



FASP - Florida Association of Aging Services Providers Facebook page

<http://www.facebook.com/home.php?#!/pages/FASP-Florida-Association-of-Aging-Services-Providers/186392068069967>

FASP - Florida Association of Aging Services Providers Twitter

<http://twitter.com/FLAgingServProv>



Florida Department of Elder Affairs (DOEA) Facebook page

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Florida-Department-of-Elder-Affairs/128604923878650?sk=wall>

FCOA - Florida Council on Aging Facebook page

<http://www.facebook.com/home.php?#!/pages/Florida-Council-on-Aging/74320166787>

FCOA - Florida Council on Aging Twitter

<http://twitter.com/#!/FCOA1>



www.wellcare.com



www.master-host.net



www.maevolen.com



www.osceolagenerations.org



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This issue of the FASP e-Newsletter was brought to you by the generous donation of



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The intent of the FASP Newsletter is to keep you informed about program updates and information relating to aging services providers. If you have any comments about the newsletter, suggestions on ways to improve it and/or items you would like included, please contact FASP by e-mail at moreinfo@fasp.net or by phone at (850) 222-3524.

The mission of FASP is to support and advocate for public and non-profit organizations engaged in the provision of community-based services to Florida's elders to improve their quality of life.



UWF CENTER ON AGING ELDER JUSTICE WORKSHOP

**FRIDAY, MARCH 23, 2012
UWF CONFERENCE CTR. AUDITORIUM
9:00 A.M. — 12:00 NOON**

Presenters:

- ▲ **Dr. Pam Teaster, Director of The Justice Center for Elders and Vulnerable Adults, University of Kentucky.**
- ▲ **Eric Schurger, Attorney, Department of Children and Families, Pensacola Florida**
- ▲ **Allison Bryant, Statewide Elder Abuse Prevention Coordinator, Florida Department of Elder Affairs**



E-mail the COA office to reserve a seat at the workshop — coa@uwf.edu