

# The Link

Your Senior Resource Connection

January - February 2012

## National Council on Aging (NCOA) Supports National Efforts to Improve Chronic Care

*from NCOA Week (December 11, 2011)*

NCOA is leading efforts to turn a federal plan to improve the health of individuals with multiple chronic conditions into reality for millions of Americans struggling with multiple health issues such as diabetes, heart disease, stroke, and arthritis.

Nearly three-quarters of older adults have at least two chronic conditions. In addition to taking a toll on their quality of life, the conditions are extremely costly. Care for beneficiaries with multiple chronic conditions accounts for 93% of Medicare expenditures.

With funding from the Administration on Aging (AoA), NCOA is working to increase the number of individuals who participate in the Chronic Disease Self-Management Program (CDSMP).

In just under two years, CDSMP has reached more than 76,000 participants. NCOA provides technical assistance to the 47 state grantees offering CDSMP throughout the country.

NCOA also is testing the effectiveness of an online version of CDSMP with partners in health care and community agencies, and early results are promising.

### Chronic Disease Self-Management Program

Developed and tested by Stanford University, **CDSMP** is a low-cost, evidence-based workshop designed to help people with chronic conditions gain self-confidence in their ability to control how their health problems affect their lives.

**CDSMP workshops** focus on problems that are common to individuals suffering from any chronic condition, such as pain management, nutrition, exercise, medication use, emotions, and communicating with doctors. Small-group, highly interactive workshops are six weeks long, meeting once a week for 2 ½ hours, and are facilitated by a pair of leaders one or both of whom are non-health professionals with a chronic disease themselves.

### Register for a CDSMP Workshop TODAY!

**Forsyth County - February 7 - March 13, 2012**  
**Sexton Hall Enrichment Center • 1:30pm-4pm**

**To Register: contact Lisa Howard**  
**770-538-2650 or [Lshoward@legacylink.org](mailto:Lshoward@legacylink.org)**

**Hart County - February 8 - March 14, 2012**  
**Hart County Senior Center • 1pm-3:30pm**  
**To Register: contact Hart County Senior Center**  
**706-376-3975**

## Legacy Lines



### What Complicates Your Life These Days???

Upon seeing numerous advertisements on TV and in newspapers, my husband concluded we could simplify our usage of electronics and save money at the same time by “bundling” our television, computer, etc. services into one package. Workmen came to the house at the appointed time, worked all day and hooked up all the televisions. Then they did a “training session” with the man of our house and assured him all would be well and our lives would be simpler.

I received a shorter version of the training and was assured it was going to be so fast and easy to access all the new features of our system, now.

All was not perfect and another house call was necessary in a couple of days to enable us to see the news on any station! Then off they drove, again. I maintain that a television should have an “off” button and an “on” button. But no - - you have to use numerous buttons to urge the television to actually show you a picture. I’ve come close to throwing that black box in the trash can several times.

Then Christmas came along and a new satellite radio required time on the telephone with the Help Desk because it too is set by computer. Radio sets should also just have an on and an off button with easily identifiable markings to let the user know where they are.

This all fits right into our cell phone usage, as well. Sometimes I think we need to have an 11 year old boy or girl around to help me with my phone. I don’t want to toss it in the garbage can, don’t get me wrong. I love my cell phone but sometimes I’m stuck on which button to use next and I don’t have a lot of aps from which to choose. But perhaps I could purchase an ap that would tell me how to use the television!

What complicates your life and how have you overcome that challenge? Let me know.

*Pat Freeman,*  
Executive Director

# The Link

## Kinship Care Program Receives Help from Georgia Power

On December 16, 2011, the Kinship Care Program received a check for \$2500 from the Clayton Chapter of the Citizens of Georgia Power.



**Greg Brown, Area Manager for Georgia Power Company**, presented the check to **Julia Jessee, Kinship Care Coordinator** for Legacy Link Area Agency on Aging, at the monthly support group meeting.

This generous donation will be used to support the Kinship Care program in Rabun County – for summer camp scholarships, school clothes, etc.

Kinship Care provides information and assistance to grandparents and relatives raising children; the Legacy Link AAA program serves the 13-county Georgia Mountains region.

Rabun County's Support Group meets at Wiley Presbyterian Church the 4<sup>th</sup> Friday of each month at noon with lunch provided.

For more information about Kinship Care and a support group in your area, contact Julia Jessee at 770-538-2650 or 800-845-5465/[jjessee@legacylink.org](mailto:jjessee@legacylink.org).

## Save the Date

10th Annual Forsyth Senior Expo  
Saturday, February 18, 2012 • 10am-1pm

FREE Admission

Learn about planning for the future with information regarding health care, housing, finance, safety and security, recreation, travel, and MORE.

Central Park Recreation Center  
2300 Keith Bridge Road, Cumming

Presented by Forsyth County Senior Services  
For more information call 770-781-2178

## Home Depot Brings Blooms and Fun

Staff from **Home Depot in Dahlonega** visited **Lumpkin County Senior Center** on December 20, 2011, to offer participants a crafty opportunity. Tiles, frames, and flower pots to paint and stencil were provided along with beautiful purple and blue pansies to go in the decorated pots. "The clients loved it," says Gail Monroe, Senior Center Director.

Home Depot promised to come back in the spring to plant flowers in the Senior Center garden.



*Home Depot staff (Left to Right): Scott Hutchins, Fred Brown, and Rick Patton (store manager) with Senior Center participants*

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## RSVP Volunteer View Retired Senior & Volunteer Program

### Annual Volunteer Luncheon Celebrates 'Shining Stars'



The annual RSVP Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon was held December 8, 2011, at the Georgia Mountains Center in Gainesville, GA. On this day during the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary year of RSVP, senior volunteers throughout ten NE Georgia counties were honored. Over 450 attendees enjoyed entertainment provided by employees of United Community Bank, the event sponsor. Door prizes and cash prizes were furnished by the bank with additional door prizes donated by businesses and agencies throughout the Legacy Link service area.



*Gainesville State College students in the Social Sciences Department helped prepare the venue, assisted the senior volunteers, and served the luncheon meal.*

180 volunteers earned **The President's Volunteer Service Awards**: Gold Awards for more than 500 hours of service during this past year were awarded to 20 deserving volunteers; Serving for 250-499 hours, 58 volunteers earned Silver Awards; Bronze Awards for 100-249 hours of volunteer service were merited by 112 volunteers. We applaud these individuals for their continued service.

**Elma Smithson of Blairsville** was recognized as **Volunteer of the Year** for her contribution of over 1000 hours of service in each of the last 3 years. Elma is a dedicated volunteer at Union General Hospital in Blairsville where her service is greatly

appreciated. Elma is also a past recipient of the President's Lifetime Service Award for contributing more than 4000 hours of service as an RSVP volunteer.

**Volunteer Station of the Year** was presented to **Lumpkin County Senior Center** in Dahlonega, whose 86 RSVP Volunteers provided more than 3000 hours of service this past year. Many of these volunteers deliver meals to homebound residents throughout Lumpkin County. A large number of people contribute a few hours each month to accomplish an important mission, enabling many seniors to remain living in their own homes. *(Photo: Rhonda Bailey, MOW Coordinator with Harriet Sanderlin, Senior Center Volunteer)*



The RSVP volunteers all made a significant contribution to each of the affiliate organization stations in which they serve. Their life skills and talents are used to support residents and services in their local communities. During this time of economic hardship, many local governments, non-profit agencies, and community organizations depend on volunteer staff to continue providing services to their local residents.

Besides delivering meals, Legacy Link RSVP volunteers mentor and tutor students; visit hospital patients and nursing home residents; counsel Medicare beneficiaries; educate seniors about fraud, crime, safety, and disaster preparedness issues; work at thrift stores; and teach classes at senior centers.

Interested in volunteering? Contact Dottie Suchke, RSVP Director for Legacy Link AAA, at 800-845-5465 or [djsuchke@legacylink.org](mailto:djsuchke@legacylink.org).

# The Link



Many Thanks  
to the  
United Community Bank Performers  
and  
All the 'Shining Stars' out there!



Volunteers make a difference!



# The Link

## A chance to step up to the plate...literally!

Submitted by Frank Pelligrino

### Billy Martin and the TV remote – Where are they now?

I would like to relate a story about the great baseball player and manager Billy Martin. Billy was small in stature but a lion nevertheless, the consummate general played as he managed; taking no prisoners.

One afternoon Billy received a telephone call from his head scout. The scout wanted to arrange a tryout for the best hitter he had ever seen. Billy agreed and they were to meet the next day while the team had a scheduled practice.

As the team practiced Billy noticed his head scout leading a horse onto the diamond. The horse got into the batters box, able to stand and hold a bat in his front hooves. Successively hitting five of the longest homers in the parks history Billy knew he needed this horse on his team. Later that day Billy was able to convince the commissioner of the league that the horse should be placed on the roster.

The next day the team was losing and Billy summoned the horse to the plate. Like clockwork the horse smashed the first pitch over the center field wall, it was a colossal shot, and the horse just stood there. Charging out of the dugout, practically everyone in the park could hear Billy screaming for the horse to run. At that point the horse turned to Billy and said, "If I could run I would be in the Kentucky Derby."



Bob Whitfield

Corny, I know but you don't have to run here either. I am trying to pry that remote from your hands. You too can re-experience the feel of making the great backhand play on a hard shot to third, and the feel of the bat in your hands while crushing a liner into the gap in right center.

I'm not kidding, we have players in their seventies playing three times a week and having the time of their lives. Our fifty plus co-ed club is geared at the safety of the player. Come on out and play at your own pace. As I said earlier "You don't have to run."

If you can't join us in Lumpkin County perhaps you would like to spearhead a senior softball club in your area of northeast Georgia. We would love to

have other senior teams to play against. The YMCA has been gracious allowing us use of a field here in Lumpkin County. I am sure you can find a suitable place to play in your respective communities.

Should you have any questions about starting your own team please call and I'll be glad to share how we got started here. Hopefully we will see you on the diamond.

Frank Pellegrino • Dahlonega Senior Softball • 678-343-8069

## Announcement !!!

Gainesville Mall Walkers Meetings are MOVING!

NEW LOCATION:

Belk-end of Lakeshore Mall near fountain and Legacy Shoppe

Beginning with March 6<sup>th</sup> Meeting at 9am

# The Link



## Update from GeorgiaCares State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP)

### Volunteer Combats Healthcare Fraud

*Source: Jeff Gill / Gainesville Times*

John Morris, with 30 years of experience fighting health care fraud, serves on behalf of GeorgiaCares for Legacy Link, speaking at senior centers and to any other organization that is interested in ways to identify potential fraud.

His work in the field began after a decade spent as a prosecutor in Gainesville, FL. Morris directed the Florida Medicaid Fraud Control Unit for 14 years, then served as director of Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida's special investigation unit. In 1985, he helped start the National Health Care Anti-Fraud Association, which comprises public-private groups working to combat health care fraud.

Morris retired in 2006 and moved to Gainesville, GA, to be closer to his children and grandchildren.

After hearing about a major award presented to the Administration on Aging, the federal agency overseeing the Senior Medicare Patrol program, he began to see if he could help out locally. He contacted the state coordinator, who put him in touch with Legacy Link Area Agency on Aging.

Morris indicated that 3 to 15 percent of the nation's Medicare budget is fraudulently disbursed each year. "That costs every Medicare recipient roughly \$2 per day, so it's a major impact," he said.

One big piece of advice he tells seniors: Keep a record of your appointments and prescriptions and then double-check that information against your benefits summary when it arrives in the mail.

Morris has been a volunteer with Legacy Link for about a year and on the board of directors since August.



*Photo taken by  
Sara Guevara/The Times*

### Make A Difference With A Dollar

Through Georgia Fund for Children and Elderly

**ADD YOUR TAX-DEDUCTIBLE DONATION TO YOUR GEORGIA INCOME TAX RETURN**

**FORM 500ez - LINE 11 OR FORM 500 - LINE 27**

***Donations support:***

- *Home-delivered meals and transportation for the elderly*
- *Assistance to children with special health, educational, and emotional needs*

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## Mall Walkers Meetings

*Lakeshore Mall, Gainesville  
1st Tuesday of Month at 9am*

**February 7, 2012**

**Frances Meadows Aquatic Center**

**What is there for YOU?**

Chris Minor, Recreation Program Manager  
*(Food Court)*

**March 6, 2012**

**Brenau University Learning and Leisure Institute**

**BULLI - Be a Life-Long Learner**

*NEW LOCATION -  
(Belk-end near fountain and Legacy Shoppe)*

*Call The Legacy Shoppe  
for more information: 770-538-2700*