

Valley Area Agency on Aging Presents:

Valley News

225 East Fifth Street, Suite 200
Flint, MI 48502
Phone: (810) 239-7671
(800) 978-6275
www.valleyareaaging.org



On May 16th Valley bused a record number of over 50 people to Lansing for Older Michiganian's Day. Attendees were able to speak to State Representatives regarding senior services in our community. The seniors came out from all across the state to be heard, and made a huge impact at the State Capitol.



Record numbers were also set at Senior Power Day on May 23rd at Crossroads Village. Over 2500 attendees had the opportunity to speak with representatives from over 80 agencies offering services to seniors.



On June 5th, the RSVP Department received the 2018 Governor's Service Award as an Outstanding National Service Program. Kudos to the entire RSVP team!

(Pictured left to right, Pam Moore, Yaushica Aubert, Lorraine Travis and Kathy Boles)



Mission: VAAA provides answers, action and advocacy on care for the elderly and disabled adults of Genesee, Lapeer, and Shiawassee Counties, by enhancing lives, empowering choice, sustaining independence and supporting caregivers and families.

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For more news and updates check out our Facebook page!



Visit us at www.valleyareaaging.org!

Valley Area Agency on Aging's first private-pay program, Valley Community Connect, has officially launched! The program is the product of a partnership with Critical Signal Technologies and the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging. The program offers an innovative opportunity to provide answers, action, and advocacy to a wider range of individuals.

The Valley Community Connect program is a personal emergency response system that includes a customer concierge service. Any time the button is activated on the unit, the customer is connected to a highly responsive, trained, customized call center. The call center team can assist with more than just emergency situations, including access to resources and companionship. The possibilities are endless!

VALLEY AREA AGENCY ON AGING INTRODUCES **Valley Community Connect**

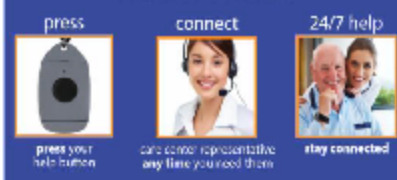
Valley Area Agency on Aging invites you to join the PERS (Personal Emergency Response System) program, Valley Community Connect! This program provides an "in-home" calling button with 24/7 connection, 2-way communication, and a customized care center. The unit promotes independence and ensures safety as well as access to resources. There are several options available, including landline and cellular units.

Valley Community Connect Advantages:

- 24/7 Personal Assistant
- Arrange Transportation
- Companionship
- Order Prescriptions or Food
- Emergency Services
- Support if You Feel Lonely or Not Well
- Assistance with Anything!



How it Works:



**Call Valley Area Agency on Aging at
(810) 239-7671 today to enroll!**





Valley Area Agency on Aging and Tivity Health SilverSneakers present the Arthritis Foundation Exercise Program, A Matter of Balance and SilverSneakers Stability. These doctor-recommended, low-impact classes are designed to deliver results for any age or fitness level, reduce pain and stiffness while keeping your joints flexible and your muscles strong. The SilverSneakers Stability class specifically targets your balance skills.

Exercise has so many mental and physical benefits. Not only can it help you lose or maintain weight, build muscle and increase energy, it can also help improve agility, motor skills, mobility and balance, helping people maintain their independence as they age,” said Julie Logue, Training Resource Manager, Tivity Health.

Kathryn Boles, Executive Director of VAAA says, “The Arthritis Exercise Class assists in improving flexibility, strength and dexterity. VAAA Senior Wellness classes are a good match with Tivity Health SilverSneakers in meeting our mutual goal of assisting seniors to remain in the community and maintaining independence by providing exercise and socialization, which ultimately results in healthy seniors.”

Classes are being offered at the following Senior Centers in the area:

- SilverSneakers Stability – Flushing Senior Center – Mondays: 9:30AM
- Arthritis Foundation Exercise Program- Loose Senior Center – Mondays: 2:00PM
- Arthritis Foundation Exercise Program – Burton Senior Center – Tuesdays: 9:00AM
- Arthritis Foundation Exercise Program – Grand Blanc Senior Center – Tuesdays: 10:00AM
- Arthritis Foundation Exercise Program – Davison Senior Center – Wednesdays: 10:00AM
- Arthritis Foundation Exercise Program – Forest Twp Senior Center – Wednesdays: 12:15PM
- Arthritis Foundation Exercise Program – Burton Senior Center – Thursdays: 9:00AM
- Arthritis Foundation Exercise Program – Hasselbring Senior Center – Thursdays: 9:00AM
- Arthritis Foundation Exercise Program – Grand Blanc Senior Center – Thursdays: 10:00AM
- SilverSneakers Stability – Owasso Senior Center – Thursdays: 1:30PM
- SilverSneakers Stability – Flushing Senior Center – Thursdays: 3:30PM
- Arthritis Foundation Exercise Program- Burton Senior Center – Fridays: 9:00AM
- Arthritis Foundation Exercise Program – Swartz Creek Senior Center – Fridays: 11:00AM

You can contact Abbie Mars at (810)239-7671 Ext 213. SilverSneakers members are encouraged to attend. SilverSneakers is a free fitness program helping seniors on Medicare to stay healthy and fit. *“You can do it!”*

Tips for Avoiding Heat Stroke and Heat Exhaustion

The extreme hot weather can be hazardous to one's health. Seniors are especially vulnerable to heat stroke and heat exhaustion. Please take precautions. Check on your elderly neighbors, family and friends. Here are a few tips to help everyone, especially seniors, remain safe in the heat.

Drink Lots of Liquids

Dehydration is the root of many heat related health problems. Drink plenty of fluids, particularly water and/or juice. However, one should avoid alcoholic or caffeinated drinks, as they can actually make dehydration worse.

Wear the Correct Clothing

Dark colors tend to make one feel hotter. Wear light-colored, lightweight, loose-fitting clothes, and don't forget to wear a wide-brimmed hat if you have to go outside.

Stay Indoors

Stay inside under the air conditioner. If you must go out do so before 10 am or in the evening after 6 pm. Or, go to your local Senior Center to stay cool, socialize and have lunch!

Go to: <http://www.valleyareaaging.org/resources/senior-centers/> to find a senior center near you.

Relax

Avoid strenuous activity such as exercise or anything that would cause you to sweat when it's very hot out.

Keep an eye on the temperature

High humidity and temperatures affect the body's ability to cool, (also known as sweating). Keep an eye on the temperature, and that includes the heat index, via your local news, weather app, or radio.

Keep it Cool

Turn on your air conditioner! If you do not have an air conditioner go to a place that does like the mall, library, movie theater or local senior center. Some senior centers, churches and community centers are "cooling centers," air-conditioned public places, for seniors and other vulnerable populations.

Go to: <http://www.valleyareaaging.org/resources/senior-centers/> and click on "click here" to view a list of senior centers to locate the center nearest you. If so absolutely cannot get to an air-conditioned facility, cool down with a nice cool shower or bath.



MMAP Corner

Hello to all and welcome back to the MMAP Corner. During this summer season, the Michigan Medicare/Medicaid Assistance Program (MMAP) here in Region 5 (Genesee, Lapeer, and Shiawassee Counties) is preparing for the up and coming remainder of 2018.

Again, MMAP is still working hard toward improving our network relationships and creating new partnerships throughout the three counties. First, just a reminder, we have placed a MMAP counselor at the Lapeer County Community Mental Health (CMH) building. The counselor is there every Tuesday assisting Beneficiaries with all Medicare/Medicaid issues and concerns, and we are still working with the new In-kind Counselor at The Disability Network (TDN) in Genesee County. Along with these 2 new relationships, we have also added a counselor at St. John Catholic Church at 600 N Adelaide St, Fenton, MI 48430. We have a counselor there every Monday. We have also connected with the new Lapeer County Adult Abuse Response Team (LCAART), which is a new program in Lapeer County assisting the community with Fraud and Abuse issues and concerns.

As another reminder, let us all continue to inform our Medicare population of the New Medicare Cards coming out this year. The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) is readying a fraud prevention initiative that removes Social Security numbers from Medicare Cards. The new cards will use a unique randomly-assigned number called a Medicare Beneficiary Identifier (MBI) to replace the currently used Social Security based Number. CMS began mailing new cards in April 2018, but we have been informed that locally, they will be mailed out June of 2018 and after. The Congressional deadline for replacing all Medicare cards is April 2019. Providers and beneficiaries will both be able to use secure look up tools that will support quick access to MBIs when they need them. There will also be a 21-month transition period where providers will be able to use either the MBI or the HICN further easing the transition. If you are, or you know, a Medicare beneficiary, please help us by informing those you know or serve throughout our community.

This year we plan to reach even more Medicare and Medicaid Beneficiaries than ever before. The Older Adult Population is growing rapidly and most of them will be in need of MMAP assistance. We are working hard to reach these populations through our outreach and partnerships by setting up booths and presentations all over our Region 5, especially in our small, outlying communities.

Here at MMAP we look forward to assisting and educating the community with and about Medicare/Medicaid related issues and concerns. Do not forget about the Open Enrollment period (OEP), beginning October 15th and ending December 7th of 2018.

If anyone would like to become a Volunteer Counselor, please contact MMAP at 1-800-803-7174.

Thank you,

Jerry Neale, LMSW

Michigan Medicare/Medicaid Assistance Program Regional Coordinator, Region 5

By Jerry Neale, Region 5 Coordinator Michigan Medicare/Medicaid Assistant Program Valley Area Agency on Aging, Flint, Michigan

Social Security A Source of Independence for Millions

By: Vonda VanTil, Social Security Public Affairs Specialist

On July 4, people in communities everywhere celebrate our nation's independence with neighbors, family, and friends. A strong community promotes independence by helping each other lead full and productive lives.



Social Security has been helping people maintain a higher quality of life and a level of independence for over 80 years. Over those decades, we've made it even easier for you to access the programs and benefits you might need. Now, applying online is the fastest way to get those crucial benefits.

Here are some of the types of benefits you can apply for:

Retirement or Spouse's Benefits – You must be at least 61 years and 9 months old and want your benefits to start no more than four months in the future. Apply at www.socialsecurity.gov/retireonline.

Disability – You can apply online for disability benefits or continue an application you already started. Apply for Disability at www.socialsecurity.gov/disabilityonline.

Extra Help with Medicare Prescription Drug Costs – Many people need assistance with the cost of medications. Apply for Extra Help at www.socialsecurity.gov/i1020.

Medicare – Medicare is a national health insurance program administered by the U.S. federal government that began in 1966. You can apply online or continue an application you already started at www.socialsecurity.gov/retireonline.

Supplemental Security Income (SSI) – SSI is a federal income program funded by general tax revenues designed to help aged, blind, and disabled people who have little or no income. You may be able to apply online if you meet certain requirements. See if you can apply online for SSI at www.socialsecurity.gov/benefits/ssi.

Social Security provides benefits for millions of people including wounded warriors and children, the chronically ill and the disabled who cannot work. Find the help you or your family need at www.socialsecurity.gov/benefits.

Don't forget, our many online services can provide you and the ones you love with lifelong independence. From replacing a lost Social Security card to estimating your benefits, you can access these powerful tools at www.socialsecurity.gov/onlineservices.

Vonda VanTil is the Public Affairs Specialist for West Michigan. You can write her c/o Social Security Administration, 3045 Knapp NE, Grand Rapids MI 49525 or via email at vonda.vantil@ssa.gov

10 Powerful Ways to Use Social Security Online

By: Vonda VanTil, Social Security Public Affairs Specialist



Chances are good that you use the internet or a cell phone app every day. Social Security has you covered. We've created online tools to make the lives of millions of people easier. We've put together a top ten list of easy-to-use resources for you.

Want access to our latest news, retirement planning tips, and helpful information? *Social Security Matters* is our blog at blog.socialsecurity.gov. There, you can also connect with us on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and YouTube, where you can watch our popular videos.

Our online calculators, such as the Retirement Estimator, the Life Expectancy Calculator, and the Early or Late Retirement Calculator, can be found at www.socialsecurity.gov/planners/calculators.

Apply for Social Security benefits online. This is the fastest, most convenient way to apply for retirement, spouses, disability, or Medicare benefits without visiting a local office or calling to speak to a representative; we can be found online at www.socialsecurity.gov/benefits.

Lost or missing your Social Security card? Find out how to get a new, replacement, or corrected card at www.socialsecurity.gov/ssnumber. In fact, you may be able to quickly request a replacement card online with a *my Social Security* account, if you meet certain qualifications, at www.socialsecurity.gov/myaccount.

Q & A

Question: I served in the military, and I'll receive a military pension when I retire. Will that affect my Social Security benefits?

Answer: You can get both Social Security retirement benefits and military retirement at the same time. Generally, we don't reduce your Social Security benefits because of your military benefits. When you're ready to apply for Social Security retirement benefits, go to www.socialsecurity.gov/applyonline. This is the fastest and easiest way to apply. For your convenience, you can always save your progress during your application and complete it later. And thank you for your military service!

Question: What type of information will I need to provide if I'd like to apply online for Social Security retirement benefits?

Answer: Whether you apply for retirement benefits online, by phone, or in an office, we suggest that you have the following information at hand when you do it. This will make completing the application easier for you.

Your birthdate, place of birth and Social Security number;

Your bank account number and your bank's routing number, for direct deposit;

The amount of money you earned last year and this year. If you are applying for benefits in the months of September through December, you may also need to provide an estimate of what you expect to earn next year if you plan to continue working;

The name and address of your employer(s) for this year and last year;

The beginning and ending dates of any active military service you had prior to 1968; and

The name, Social Security number and date of birth of your current and any former spouses.

Depending on your situation, you may need to provide additional documentation with your application. We'll give you instructions on how to mail or bring it to us. To get started, visit our *Retirement Planner* at www.socialsecurity.gov/retire2.

Question: If I go back to work, will I automatically lose my Social Security disability benefits?

Answer: No, Social Security has several work incentive programs to help people who want to work. You may be able to receive monthly benefits and continue your health care coverage during a trial work period. For information about Social Security's work incentives and how they can help you return to work, you should:

Visit our special work site at www.socialsecurity.gov/work;

See the *Red Book* on work incentives at www.socialsecurity.gov/redbook; or

Check out our publications at www.socialsecurity.gov/pubs and type "work" in the search box.

For more information, visit our website at www.socialsecurity.gov or call us toll-free at 1-800-772-1213

Question: I have a 38-year-old son who has been disabled by cerebral palsy since birth. I plan to apply for retirement benefits. Will he be eligible for benefits as my disabled child?

Answer: Yes. In general, an adult disabled before age 22 may be eligible for child's benefits if a parent is deceased or starts receiving retirement or disability benefits. We consider this a "child's" benefit because we pay it on the parent's Social Security earnings record.

The "adult child"—including an adopted child, or, in some cases, a stepchild, grandchild, or step grandchild—must be unmarried, age 18 or older, and have a disability that started before age 22.

Question: If I receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI) disability, what is the effect on my benefits when I take seasonal work?

Answer: Even a small amount of earned wages can cause a deduction in your SSI payment. However, it takes substantial work to make your benefits stop. In many cases, we will deduct approved work expenses to determine your SSI payment amount. In most cases, you can continue to receive your medical coverage for up to two years after you begin working. We have several publications on SSI, including *Reporting Your Wages When You Receive Supplemental Security Income*, available at www.socialsecurity.gov/pubs. For more information, call us toll-free at 1-800-772-1213 (TTY 1-800-325-0778) or visit our website at www.socialsecurity.gov.

Question: I will rely on Medicare when I retire. Can you explain the different parts of Medicare?

Answer: The different parts of Medicare cover your specific needs. There are four parts, all of which work in tandem to deliver healthcare services.

- Part A (hospital insurance): Hospital insurance helps pay for inpatient care in a hospital or skilled nursing facility (following a hospital stay), some home health care, and hospice care.
- Part B (medical insurance): Medical insurance helps pay for doctors' services and many other medical services and supplies that hospital insurance doesn't cover.
- Part C (Medicare Advantage plans): If you have Medicare Parts A and B, you can join a Medicare Advantage plan. Private companies offer Medicare Advantage plans which are approved by Medicare. These plans generally help you pay the medical costs not covered by Medicare Part A and B.

Dates to Remember

September 3, 2018: Labor Day, VAAA Closed

September 25, 2018: Legislative Committee 10:00 a.m. and Advisory Council Meeting 11:00 a.m.

September 28, 2018: Board of Directors Meeting 10:00 a.m.

October 8, 2018: Columbus Day, VAAA Closed

October 23, 2018: Legislative Committee 10:00 a.m. and Advisory Council Meeting 11:00 a.m.

October 26, 2018: Board of Directors Meeting 10:00 a.m.

November 12, 2018: Veterans Day (observed), VAAA Closed

November 13, 2018: Legislative Committee 10:00 a.m. and Advisory Council Meeting 11:00 a.m.

November 16, 2018: Board of Directors Meeting 10:00 a.m.

November 22, 2018: Thanksgiving Day, VAAA Closed

November 23, 2018: Day after Thanksgiving, VAAA Closed

December 18, 2018: Legislative Committee 10:00 a.m. and Advisory Council Meeting 11:00 a.m.

December 21, 2018: Board of Directors Meeting 10:00 a.m.

December 24, 2018: Christmas Eve, VAAA Closed

December 25, 2018: Christmas Day, VAAA Closed

December 31, 2018: New Year's Eve, VAAA Closed

January 1, 2019: New Year's Day, VAAA Closed

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