

The Caregiver's Voice

For People Caring for Family, Friends, & Neighbors

Volume 2, Issue 2

Spring 2009

The Caregiver's Voice is a quarterly publication of the AA County Department of Aging & Disabilities' National Family Caregiver Support Program. Contact us at: 410-222-4464 ext 3043 or caregiver_support@aaacounty.org

Inside this issue	
Caregiver Self-Assessment	2
Grandparents Raising Grandchildren	2
Memory Walk 2009	3
Go Green	3
What You Should Know About Osteoporosis	3
Educational Opportunities	3
Support Groups	3
DoAD Programs	4

17th Annual Caregivers' Conference



It's not too late to register for the 17th Annual Caregivers' Conference scheduled for Saturday, April 18, 2009! This year's conference will offer a variety of informational opportunities for both family and professional caregivers. Sylvia Mackey, wife and caregiver of legendary NFL player John Mackey, will open the day by sharing her experiences as a caregiver. Breakout session topics include *Understanding Sensory Loss, Family/Professional Dialogue, Health Care Options, Ethics for the Professional, Taking on the Role of Caring for Mom/Dad, and Taking on the Role of Caring for your Spouse*. In addition, there will be mini-sessions addressing Parkinson's Disease and Diabetes. Kate Gordon, Associate Director, State Policy & Advocacy Programs for the Alzheimer's Association, will close the day explaining how caregivers can *Get Involved in the Caregiver Cause*.

A continental breakfast, lunch and afternoon snack will be provided. Back by popular demand, *The South County Show Stoppers* will provide lunch time entertainment.

A variety of vendors will be available throughout the day to showcase their products and provide information to assist you in your caregiving duties.

Registration for the event for family/informal caregivers is \$10.

To register for the conference, you can:

- Mail in a completed registration form
- Call 410-222-4464, ext 3043 or 3045
- www.aacounty.org/aging & click the link for Family Caregiver Support

Active Day of Annapolis and Active Day of Pasadena will provide free respite care for your loved one. To reserve a space with Active Day, call 410-573-9100 (Annapolis) or 410-255-2879 (Pasadena) no later than April 13th.

This year's conference is presented by the Anne Arundel County Department of Aging & Disabilities, Active Day of Annapolis Center, Active Day of Pasadena Center, the Alzheimer's Association, Generations, Gero-Resources LLC, The Institute for Johns Hopkins Nursing, Johns Hopkins Geriatric Education Center Consortium, and Somerford Place of Annapolis.

Spring Workshop Series *A Recipe for Disaster: Clutter, Falling & Medication Management*

1st: Clutter & Home Safety
2nd: Using Assistive Devices
3rd: Medication Management

Annapolis Senior Center

119 South Villa Ave.
Tuesdays: April 14, 21, 28
(6-8 pm)

Arnold Senior Center

44 Church Road
Mondays: May 4, 11, 18
(6:30-8:30 pm)

Brooklyn Park Senior Center

202 Hammonds Lane
Thursdays: June 11, 18, 25
(1-3 pm)

Summer Workshop *Aging—What's Normal? What's Not?*

Annapolis Senior Center

119 South Villa Ave.
Tuesday, June 23 (1-3 pm)

Arnold Senior Center

44 Church Road
Wednesday, July 15 (1-3 pm)

Brooklyn Park Senior Center

202 Hammonds Lane
Friday, August 7 (1-3 pm)

O'Malley Senior Center

1275 Odenton Road Odenton
Wednesday, August 5 (1-3 pm)

Pasadena Senior Center

4103 Mountain Road
Wednesday, July 8 (1-3 pm)

Pascal Senior Center

125 Dorsey Road, Glen Burnie
Tuesday, August 11 (6:30-8:30 pm)

South County Senior Center

27 Stepneys Lane, Edgewater
Thursday, July 9 (6:30-8:30 pm)

For more information, or to register for the Workshops, call 410-222-4464, ext 3043 or register on-line at: <http://www.aacounty.org/Aging/needngCare/compCaregiver.cfm>

Caregiver Self-Assessment Questionnaire (www.pbs.org/caringforyourparents)

How are YOU?

Caregivers are often so concerned with caring for their relative's needs that they lose sight of their own well-being. Please take just a moment to answer the following questions. During the past week or so, I have...

1. Had trouble keeping my mind on what I was doing... Yes No
2. Felt that I couldn't leave my relative alone... Yes No
3. Had difficulty making decisions... Yes No
4. Felt completely overwhelmed... Yes No
5. Felt useful and needed... Yes No
6. Felt lonely... Yes No
7. Been upset that my relative has changed so much from his/her former self... Yes No
8. Felt a loss of privacy and/or personal time... Yes No
9. Been edgy or irritable... Yes No
10. Had sleep disturbed because of caring for my relative... Yes No
11. Had a crying spell(s)... Yes No
12. Felt strained between work and family responsibilities... Yes No
13. Had back pain... Yes No
14. Felt ill (headaches, stomach problems or common cold)... Yes No

15. Been satisfied with the support my family has given me... Yes No
16. Found my relative's living situation to be inconvenient or a barrier to care... Yes No
17. On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being "not stressful" to 10 being "extremely stressful," please rate your current level of stress. _____
18. On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being "very healthy" to 10 being "very ill," please rate your current health compared to what it was this time last year. _____

To determine the score:

1. Reverse score questions 5 and 15. (For example, a "No" response should be counted as "Yes" and a "Yes" response should be counted as "No.")
2. Total the number of "yes" responses.

To interpret the score

Chances are that you are experiencing a high degree of distress:

- If you answered "Yes" to either or both questions 4 and 11; or
- If your total "Yes" score = 10 or more; or
- If your score on question 17 is 6 or higher; or
- If your score on question 18 is 6 or higher

Next steps

- Consider seeing a doctor for a check-up for yourself
- Consider having some relief from caregiving (Discuss with the doctor or a social worker the resources available in your community.)
- Consider joining a support group (Note the Anne Arundel County Department of Aging & Disabilities Support Group time on page 3.)

In addition, you can:

- Take advantage of the Anne Arundel County National Family Caregiver Support Program's workshops and conferences.
- Call the Anne Arundel County Respite Care Referral Program (410-222-4464 ext 3045/3094) or Family Caregiver Support Program (410-222-4464 ext 3043/3045) for information/assistance.

Check out the Family Caregiver Support page on the Department of Aging & Disabilities' website (aacounty.org/aging) for links to additional caregiver information and resources!



Grandparents Raising Grandchildren

In Maryland, public and private agencies and grassroots coalitions of grandparents and other relative caregivers have begun working together to expand the services available to kinship caregivers who are caring for children outside of the foster care system.

The **Kinship Care Resource Center** of Maryland provides information, referrals, and support services for kinship care families. The Center assists caregivers in developing support groups and in identifying the most pressing needs and concerns of kinship caregivers for legislators and other policy makers. Contact: *Dr. Earlene Merrill, Executive Director, at (410) 225-0193 or 1-888-440-0193.*

The **Maryland Department of Human Resources, Social Services Administration** supports new and

existing kinship care support groups throughout the state. These support groups offer an array of services and activities for adults and children.

Dianne Timmons-Himes at (410) 767-7195 or Cynthia Harlee-Williams at (410) 767-7787.

Kinship Care Connections is a newsletter that is published quarterly and distributed to kinship caregivers, advocates and public/private organizations. The newsletter provides information from state, local and community-based agencies. Contact: *Cynthia Harlee-Williams at (410) 767-7787*

The **YWCA** of Annapolis & Anne Arundel County West County Family Support Center offers kinship care support groups in Odenton and Annapolis. They offer parent education, resource sharing, and access

to numerous support services including transportation, child care and respite services. Contact: *Alice Harris, Program Director, at (410) 551-2411.*

Through the **National Family Caregivers' Support Program**, the Anne Arundel County Department of Aging & Disabilities has a limited amount of funding available to assist with support group & recreational activity fees for grandparents and other relative caregivers age 55+ who are the primary caregiver for children ages 18 and younger. For more information, contact *Patty Brandenburg at 410-222-4464 ext 3043.*



Check out the Family Caregiver Support page on the Department's website (aacounty.org/aging) for links to other resources and support for grandparents!



What You Should Know About Osteoporosis (Mary Fridley, RN, BSN, BC)

May is National Osteoporosis Awareness and Prevention Month and is the opportunity time to talk about this disabling disease. According to the National Osteoporosis Foundation approximately 10 million Americans suffer from it and although a majority of them are women, 2 million are men! After age 50, bone loss increases in both sexes. Risk factors include: small bones and thin frame; of Caucasian or Asian descent; have an immediate relative diagnosed with the disease or one who has broken a bone as an adult; post menopausal; high doses of thyroid medication or steroid medication use (like Prednisone) for three months or more; history of chemotherapy; diet low in calcium; are sedentary; and smoke or drink alcohol in excess. The more risk factors you have, the greater your chances of getting the disease.

Osteoporosis is a silent stalker. Many people don't know they have it until they break a bone (typically a hip, wrist, or in the spine) or have a routine bone density test. If the disease has progressed far enough, it can show up on a simple x-ray. It causes fragile bones that can break from something as innocent as a hug or a sneeze. And of course falling is the most damaging of all.

Prevention, although simple, amounts to making life-style changes; an effort that is a life-long commitment. Recommendations include increasing dietary calcium by eating more dairy products, calcium and vitamin D fortified foods (orange juice, milk, cereals, yogurt, and soy), green vegetables (broccoli, bok choy,

kale, and turnip greens), and taking calcium with vitamin D supplements. Vitamin D is essential for moving calcium into the bones. It has recently grabbed the attention of the medical community as being more valuable than otherwise thought. It is recommended that all women get a base-line vitamin D blood test at age 50. Newer research is looking at the value of all people being screened at a younger age.

A new study funded in part by the USDA Agricultural Research Service suggests that "neutralizing an acid-producing diet may be an important key to reducing bone breakdown, or "turnover", while aging." The diet in the study contained nine servings of fruits and vegetables a day (as compared to the 4-5 servings currently recommended). More research is needed before recommending what is referred to as "a safe and low-cost approach" to improving bone health in both older women and men.

Bone density screening is recommended for women starting at age 50. This painless, simple x-ray type test is invaluable in diagnosing the disease. Talk to your primary care practitioner about what testing, diet changes, and supplements are right for you.

Weight bearing exercises (those that work against gravity) like walking, running, weight lifting, dancing, aerobics, tennis, etc. are essential for bone health. Swimming, although providing a good cardiovascular workout, is not a weight bearing exercise and does not afford the same

Blessings, Mary

Additional Educational Opportunity

Through the Department of Aging & Disabilities Respite Care Referral Program, Mary Fridley, RN, BSN, BC will offer the following in-service. Family caregivers are invited. All sessions take place from 6:00-8:00 pm. Pre-registration is NOT required.



Help! I've Fallen & I Can't Get Up

Learn how to prevent falls, help the fallen individual up, and how to transfer safely.

Wednesday, April 8: Pascal Senior Center
Thursday, April 23: 2666 Riva Road, Suite 400, Annapolis.

Support Groups



Mary Fridley, RN, BSN, BC, facilitates a monthly support group at the Department of Aging & Disabilities office,

2666 Riva Road, Suite 400, Annapolis. Sessions are held on the **third Tuesday of the month from 1-2:30 pm**. Please note: If AA County schools are closed, or close early due to inclement weather, there will be no meeting that day.

For information on other community support groups, or cancer, diabetes, cardiac, stroke or Parkinson's support groups, call Patty Brandenburg at 410-222-4464, ext 3043, email us caregiver_support@aacounty.org or download the Community Support Group flyer from the web at:

www.aacounty.org/aging

Go Green!

If you would prefer the Caregiver's Voice newsletter to be emailed to you in a PDF format, please contact us at 410-222-4464, ext 3043 or email us at caregiver_support@aacounty.org. Back issues of the newsletter are available on the Family Caregivers' website at www.aacounty.org/aging/aging_services/famCareSupport



Memory Walk 2009

Great news! The Alzheimer's Association's Memory Walk is returning to Anne Arundel County. Memory Walk 2009 is scheduled for Saturday, October 17, 2009 at Severn School in Severna Park. During this time of tightening our belts, it's good to know that 78% of the moneys collected will benefit local Alzheimer's education, support programs, and respite care assistance, along with national research. For more information and to sign up as a walker, check out www.alz.org/maryland/memorywalk.

Did you know...

Every 71 seconds someone is diagnosed with Alzheimer's Disease? Alzheimer's Disease is the 6th leading cause of death in the US, surpassing Diabetes?

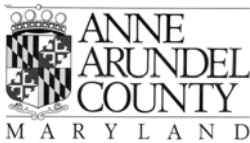
Over 85,000 people in Maryland alone have Alzheimer's disease?

Anne Arundel County Department of Aging & Disabilities
National Family Caregiver Support Program

2666 Riva Road, Suite 400
Annapolis, MD 21401

Phone: 410-222-4464 ext 3043
Email: caregiver_support@aacounty.org

We're on the web!
www.aacounty.org



The Anne Arundel County Department of Aging & Disabilities

County Executive
John R. Leopold
Arundel Center
44 Calvert Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

Carol Baker, PhD, Director
Department of Aging & Disabilities
Heritage Office Complex
P.O. Box 6675
2666 Riva Road, Suite 400
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
Phone: 410-222-4464
Fax: 410-222-4360
www.aacounty.org/Aging

- Maryland Access Point (MAP)
- Adult Evaluation & Review Service (AERS)
- Foster Grandparents
- Handy Cab Program
- Senior Centers & Senior Center Plus
- Respite Care Referral Program
- Retired & Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP)
- Medicaid Waiver Program
- Community Care Partnership
- Friendly Visitors Program
- Senior Housing Assistance
- Adult Public Guardianship
- Senior Legal Assistance
- Long-Term Care Ombudsman
- Senior Nutrition Program
- Telephone Reassurance
- Van Transportation
- Pets on Wheels/MOM & ME
- Senior Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP)
- Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP)
- Medical Assistance Personal Care Program (MAPCP)
- Carrier Alert
- Disabilities Information & Awareness Line
- National Family Caregiver Support Program

National Family Caregiver Support Program Staff

Jeffrey Balentine, MPA, Assistant Director, Long Term Care
Mary Chaput, Program Director
Patricia Brandenburg, NFCSP Coordinator