

URBAN AGING NEWS

Urban Aging L3C

FREE

Issue 13 | FALL 2018

Info, Insight & Inspiration for Metro Detroit's Maturing Adults



Aging **MATTERS**
EDUCATION & EXPO

Thursday, November 1, 2018
8:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

DETAILS INSIDE

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By Pat Rencher

I guess I'm obsessed with this aging thing and with being prepared for what is to come. When I see older adults and adult children, I yearn to ask if they are ready. "Ready for what?" I'd imagine them saying. Well . . . here's what!

I would proceed to tell them how important it is for them to consider now just how they plan to manage aging. If they seemed to be the slightest bit interested,

I'd go on to tell them how planning is key to aging well. It has to be intentional. Just as we are intentional about exercising and eating well, we must be just as vigilant about making sure that future legal, safety and social needs are planned for as well.

Almost daily, I hear the tragic stories of the dilemmas adult children face when caring for their aging parents. Far too many of the stories center on internal problems: the uncooperative parent who refuses to allow helpers to come into the home, parents who don't see the need to relieve the family caregiver with outside assistance, or the parent who refuses to draw up or sign the legal paper work required to avoid probate court – and these problems are all preventable with advance planning.

Other problems are external, such as family members not knowing where to go to get help for their elder loved ones. They need information on outside

resources, services and programs. They need introductions to entitlement programs and information about programs they should be aware of but too often are not.

Several of us from the Aging Network recognized this need five years ago. This led to the establishment of an informational event that was then called The Detroit Caregivers Support Conference. Even though the information was vitally needed, attendance was scant in those days - and we soon discovered why.

The research tells us that adult children don't often self-identify as caregivers so they don't think to gather caregiver information. They say, taking mom to her doctors' appointments hardly qualifies as caregiving. But in fact, it does.

Last year, we re-branded the event as the Aging Matters Education & Expo and tons of

people attended. Many of the workshops, speakers and topics were the same but people were just more open to accessing the information when it was presented as an aging issue versus a caregiver's resource. And that's OK. We just want people to get the information and preferably before a medical crisis occurs.

On pages 5 and 8 you can learn more about this year's Aging Matters Education & Expo event, to be held November 1 from 8 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. at Second Ebenezer Church. Join us and encourage your friends to attend. After all . . . you may know that they can benefit from this information long before they realize just how much they need to know.

Peace & Blessings,

Patricia Ann Rencher
Publisher
Urban Aging News

OUR STAFF

URBAN AGING L3C

UAN is a free publication circulated throughout metro Detroit

For advertising, editorial contributions or distribution site requests, call (313) 204-5140

Publisher.....Patricia Ann Rencher
Editor.....Alicia Nails Graphics.....Edgar W. Chambliss, Jr.

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Wartime veterans, veteran spouses or surviving spouses may be eligible for the Department of Veteran Affairs' Aid and Attendance Pension benefit. The monthly benefit is tax-free and provides financial assistance to those 65 years old and older needing assistance and the help of others to perform two or more activities of daily living. ADL's, as they are called, can include bathing, toileting, dressing, eating, walking and transferring. The benefit is designed to give financial aid to applicants for in-home care, or to help pay for an assisted living facility or a nursing home.

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You may apply for Aid and Attendance or Housebound benefits by writing to the Pension Management Center that serves Michigan (see below). You may also visit your local regional benefit office to file your request. You will need documentation of any evidence, preferably a report from an attending physician, validating the need for Aid and Attendance or Housebound type care.

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Aging Matters Expo

The Aging Matters Education and Expo event will provide up-to-date information to older adults, their adult children, family caregivers and service providers. Programs and services that assist families when they are overwhelmed by the physical or mental decline of an elder loved one will be highlighted. These quality of life and family coping issues will be discussed in conjunction with the services, resources and support that is available to assist in aging with dignity.

The Expo will be held Thurs-

day, Nov. 1 from 8 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. at Second Ebenezer Church, 14600 Dequindre in Detroit.

"While we're living longer, many of us are not aging well. Too few of us have a good understanding of available services or what steps we can take now to make sure we're not scrambling in the event of the infirmity or incapacitation of our elder loved ones," said Pat Rencher, Michigan State Advisory Council on Aging member and the event's manager. Rencher is also the publish-

er of Urban Aging magazine. The Advisory Council and partnering senior-serving organizations have focused on presenting workshops that detail Medicare/Medicaid benefits and requirements, essential legal planning for elder issues, and information on the home and community-based services that many are not aware of.

"Waiting until a medical event occurs to then begin planning for or seeking out services ultimately limits choice. Once a family member experiences cognitive decline, it's

nearly impossible to put certain aspects of their life and business affairs in place," said Rencher.

In addition to workshops, researcher Edna Rose Ph.D. of the University of Michigan Alzheimer's Disease Center will give an opening address on the silent epidemic of Alzheimer's disease in the African American community. Since 2008, Rose has assisted the MADC with connecting to communities of color and providing education on the risk factors associated with dementia.

Story continued on page 11



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Free Attendance • Registration Required for individuals or groups at:
313.444.3821 or AgingMattersExpo.com.



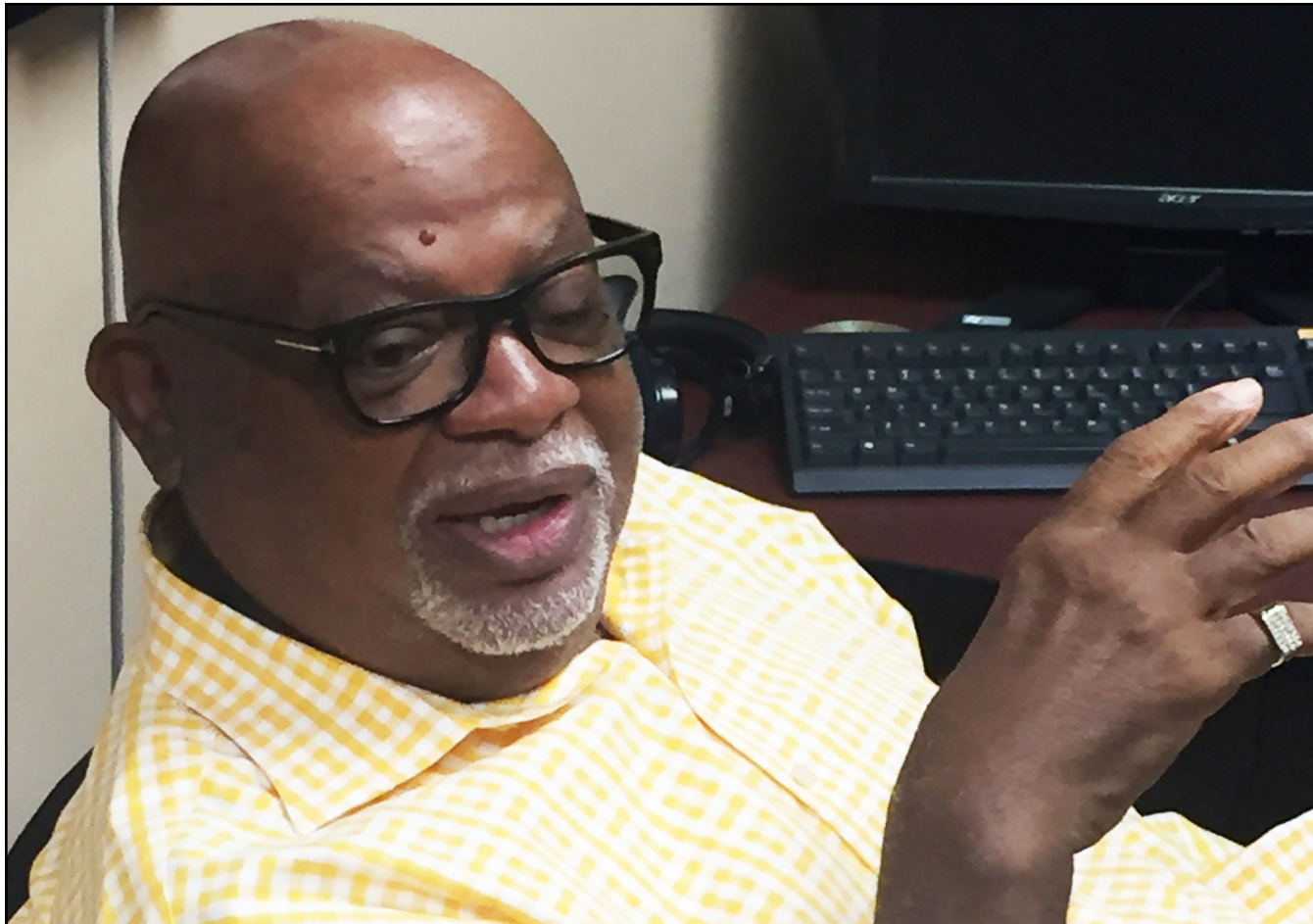
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Paul Bridgewater: An Aging Advocate Retires



When the Detroit Area Agency on Aging was founded 38 years ago, Paul Bridgewater worked for the City of Detroit under Mayor Coleman A. Young. The mayor assigned Bridgewater to DAAA, temporarily, to manage contracts. Six years later, the executive was appointed agency director and in 2007 he was named president and CEO. This year he retires from a role that he says provided him with his life's passion

and purpose.

"I wasn't happy about the assignment because working for Coleman was exciting," Bridgewater says. "But it was one of the best things that could have happened. I found my passion and fell in love with serving and advocating for an urban, minority population who had been overlooked and underserved."

DAAA is one of 16 Area

Agencies on Aging in Michigan and one of 670 nationwide. It serves seniors in Detroit, Hamtramck, Highland Park, Harper Woods and the five Grosse Pointes. During Bridgewater's tenure, the agency grew from 12 employees to 150 and from an annual operating budget of \$8.4 million to the current \$72 million.

"Our agency services the largest minority population of older adults in our state," said Bridgewater, who es-

timates that DAAA touches 10,000 seniors every day. These services include meals, as well as information and referrals for older adults, family caregivers and people living with disabilities.

A Saginaw native, Bridgewater says he's most proud of being a positive policy influencer. He says he believes his legacy will include the vital two-volume research reports, "Dying Before Their Time I & II," that he supported. The reports document the health and service factors that led to higher mortality rates among older Detroiters.

"Prior to the 'Dying Before Their Time' studies, there was no exposure nor explanation nor sensitivity to how Detroiters were aging and why Detroiters were prematurely dying," Bridgewater says.

The findings helped the agency move from operating solely in the social service sector into also operating in the health care sector, leading to expanded programming that provides services at the intersection of these two disciplines.

Story continued on next page



Paul Bridgewater -
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Along with his wife, Juanita, he has also expanded programming to include support for grandparents who are raising their grandchildren.

“Juanita and I were experiencing first-hand what a lot of grandparents were experiencing in the 90s. Older adults had raised their own children and, for a variety of reasons, many were now faced with having to raise their grandchildren as well.”

Bridgewater says he’s proud of establishing the agency’s successful Meals on Wheels fundraiser to serve holiday meals, which are not covered by federal funds. Another highlight, he says, was selecting and recruiting Rosa Parks to serve as the fundraiser’s first chairperson in 1987, and the national exposure the agency received when Parks was featured on NBC’s Today Show helping to prepare meals.

“That national exposure,” says Bridgewater, “helped to tell our story and helped us to serve meals that were not previously

served on holidays.”

The expert on aging issues has served as a delegate to every White House Conference on Aging and White House Conference on Social Security. He also served on the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging’s Cultural Diversity Committee, the National Caucus and Center on Black Aged, and is past president of Michigan’s 16 Area Agencies on Aging Association. He is also past chairperson of the Michigan Minority Aging Network and past president of Michigan Society of Gerontology.

“Those experiences were exciting and memorable, but what’s really important is how those opportunities gave me the opportunity to expose issues in minority aging and to advocate for increased services and funding.”

He expanded his information and advocacy mission to the airwaves and for 15 years he has hosted the Senior Solutions radio program. He’s also written weekly articles on aging well in the Michigan Chronicle.

Story continued on page 9



STRIDES

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September
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Paul Bridgewater
Campaign Chair

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StridesForSeniors.org

Paul Bridgewater -
Continued from page 8

As he prepares to enter the next phase of life as a retiree, Bridgewater encourages Aging Network administrators, service providers, policy makers and others to continue to

promote education and planning so that older adults are able to enjoy their later years.

“Baby Boomers are used to having it their way and they’ll need a lot of education and preparation for the realities of aging.”



- Career Highlights -

- Establishing one of the country’s largest Meals on Wheels programs
- Operating Michigan’s top care management and home care support services
- Developing the first Area Agency on Aging in the country that targets Medicare recipients with diabetes
- Creating a metro Detroit, region-wide Medicare/Medicaid counseling program
- Forming the Detroit Long Term Care System Change Task Force to reform skilled nursing facilities
- Establishing the statewide Michigan Kinship Care Conference for Grandparents Raising Grandchildren, a free conference bringing information and resources to enlighten and address issues and challenges grandparents and relative caregivers face raising their children.
- Spearheading research on health disparities among Detroit’s elderly for the award-winning reports, *Dying Before Their Time I & II*, some of the first research focusing on Detroit seniors, their premature illness, excessive hospitalizations and high death rates.
- Establishment of four Community Health & Wellness Centers in the DAAA service area

NEWS BRIEFS

Strides for Seniors is held during National Senior Center Month to increase awareness about how valuable senior centers are as resources, and promote senior wellness and independence. It raises funds for critical services. The event supports senior centers in Detroit, Hamtramck, Highland Park and the five Grosse Pointes. The Walk & Expo will be held on Fri., Sept. 21 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Palmer Park in Detroit. Participants may dance the hustle, participate in either a 1 or 3 mile walk, or visit vendor tables. Walker/hustle fee is \$25 and includes event t-shirt and lunch. For more details, call: 313.833-7080.

70 Over 70 Awards - Hannan Center will host its annual 70 Over 70 Awards on Sat., Oct. 6 at the Dearborn Inn to show that human potential continues and often increases with age. Awards are given for: Art, Changemaker, Civic/Community Leadership, Entrepreneurship, Lifelong Learning, Lifetime Achievement, and Unsung Hero. The event includes a gourmet brunch and entertainment. Tickets are \$100 and all proceeds support programs and services of Hannan Center, including emergency grants to seniors. Tickets can be purchased by visiting www.70overseventy.com or by calling Tara Franey at 313.833.1300 ext. 20. Located in Midtown, Hannan’s programs allow older adults to improve their health, remain in their homes, access transportation and meal services and explore their creative talents. For more information visit www.hannan.org or call 313.833.1300

19th Annual Solutions for Family Caregivers Expo

Area Agency on Aging 1-B
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Aging Matters Education & Expo

Thursday, November 1
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Second Ebenezer Church
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Detroit, Michigan 48212
313.444-3821
AgingMattersExpo.com

Advanced Directives



While no one likes to think about it, an illness or injury may leave you unable to make important health care decisions for yourself. It is important to be prepared for that possibility and write down your wishes in an advanced directive so your wishes are known and honored. Advanced directives is a form where you can write down what type of care you want and who you want to make those decisions for you when you cannot make them for yourself. It can also keep families from wondering or avoiding irreparable family relationships.

Advanced directives go by many different names including a Do Not Resuscitate Order, Health Care Power of Attorney and Patient Advocate Designation. It is a voluntary form, but it is helpful to health providers and your family members to know what treatments you would want and those you would not.

When completing an advanced directive, you select a Patient Advocate to carry out your wishes or to make decisions about your care when you

cannot. The Patient Advocate becomes your spokesperson and advocates on treatments you can outline in the document. It should be someone you know well and is willing to carry out your directions regardless of their personal feelings or influences from family and friends.

Advanced directives are free, do not expire and should be reviewed periodically to make sure they still reflect your wishes. You'll need to make sure you provide a copy to your health care providers, doctors and hospitals so they will have a copy on file.

Forms are available at multiple locations including hospitals, Area Agencies on Aging and the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services website. The state provides the Patient Advocate Designation Form (DCH-3916) and the opportunity, at no cost, to file the form on a statewide registry called Peace of Mind. Information on the registry and forms can be accessed online at www.mipeaceofmind.org, or by calling 1-800-482-4881.

Repair Man



Bob Chevalier was an accountant who loved fixing things. And he was good at it. Since retiring 22 years ago, he has provided repair services to seniors through two different senior centers. "If I had it to all over again, I'd go into the skilled trades. My dad was an accountant and that was all I knew," Bob says. Through the years, Bob has assisted seniors with ev-

erything from repairing deteriorated drapery cords to hanging pictures to installing outside banisters.

To take advantage of the repair program, contact the St. Patrick Senior Center at: 313-833-7080. Callers are responsible for the cost of materials and asked to make a contribution to the Center for Bob's services.

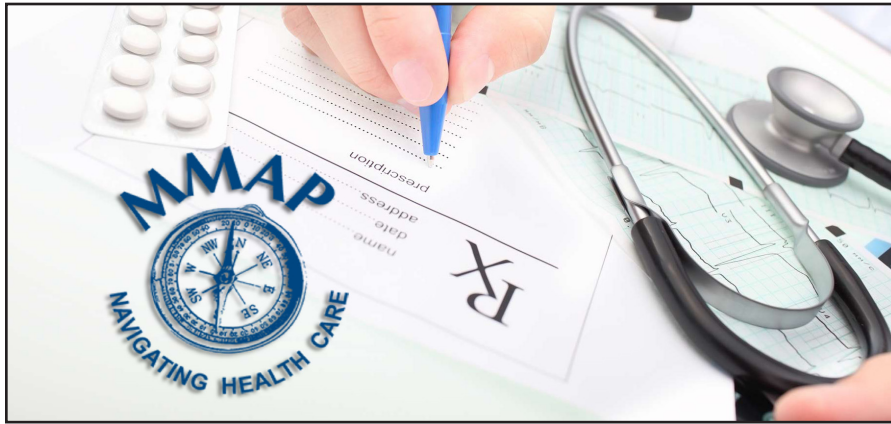


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The Medicare Open Enrollment period for next year's coverage is October 15 – December 7. This means Medicare health and drug plan providers make their revised 2019 rate and coverage information available,

along with updated information on the providers and pharmacies in their networks. Those on Medicare can review this information to determine which Medicare health plans and prescription drug coverage options will best meet their needs.

Subscribers should review changes to plans, which may include changes in coverage for a specific drug. Medicare plans also change their network of doctors and facilities, change the way they cover specific medical services, and drop or add benefits like dental, vision,

and hearing.

Beneficiaries should review the "Evidence of Coverage" and "Annual Notice of Change" materials from their current plan providers to learn of any changes and to evaluate if their plans still meet their needs.

If there are unwanted changes, subscribers can select another provider. There are counselors and extensive information at 1-800-MEDICARE or www.Medicare.gov - as well as at Michigan Medicaid and Medicare Assistance Program at www.mmapinc.org or 1-800-803-7174.

Ageing Matters Expo
Continued from page 5



Rose emphasizes the benefits she sees in participating in research and she will share current research findings along with research participation opportunities.

Attendees will have the opportunity to select from nine workshops. Two Medicare workshops are offered, to

coincide with Medicare's annual Open Enrollment period, October 15 – December 7. Additional workshops include: Technology to Enable Aging in Place, Caregiver Self-Care, and Aging in Place & Downsizing. Vision, hearing and other health screenings will also be offered.

The free Expo includes breakfast snacks and lunch. Required reservations can be made by calling 313.444-3821 or going to www.AgingMattersExpo.com.

The Alzheimer's Association of Greater Michigan, Henry Ford Health System, and Presbyterian Villages of Michigan are event sponsors.



Dr. Paula Duren

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