

URBAN AGING NEWS

Urban Aging L3C

Issue 25 | Summer 2021

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

A. Oveta Fuller, Ph. D.

**Expert on viruses and spiritual
health serves on
FDA Vaccine Review Panel**

- INSIDE -

Detroit's New Home Repair Solutions

Elder Care & Family Feuds

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ON MY MIND By Patrica Ann Rencher



Check it out in case you need their wisdom to reason with your kin folk, it's on page 12. And to arm yourself with science from professionals, read my interview with virologist Oveta Fuller, PhD, a University of Michigan scientist who sat on the FDA's vaccine advisory review panel, on page 8.

Speaking of family, an unfortunate, but often common problem among adult children and other family members is agreeing on how best to care for mama or daddy as these elders face declining health. Far too often families get ensnared in financially and emotionally costly probate court proceedings to make what should have been harmonious family decisions.

I've gotten into some heated debates with folks over being vaccinated. I couldn't help it. For your safety and for the safety of those you love, I say, get vaccinated!

Just when I decided to leave folks alone and mind my business, I discovered that there were vaccine hesitants in my own family. This really was my business. Eventually, I left them alone, too. At least for a while. In the meantime, I interviewed others for the Senior Voices feature to learn how they were dealing with the unvaccinated.

Eldercaring Coordination Michigan is a court-ordered mediation process to ensure an aging person is safe and well cared for when the judge believes family conflicts may be jeopardizing those goals. A description of that process is on page 13.

For those of us who are fully vaccinated, but still mindful of those who are not, there are plenty of opportunities to get out and enjoy ourselves while staying



socially distanced. From Seniors & Sneakers on the Riverfront Tuesday events, to other outside events, you can exercise, get some sun and much-needed socialization. See Newsbriefs on page 18 for a few suggestions.

And, finally, Detroit is addressing the single most challenging issue that is endangering its residents' ability to safely age in place: home repair.

In an unprecedented attempt to streamline home repair assistance programs, the city has now engaged and empowered community-based organizations which have the potential to hasten the process and reduce the red tape. See page 4.

Peace & Blessings,

Patricia Ann Rencher

urbanagingnews@yahoo.com

OUR STAFF



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Publisher.....Patricia Ann Rencher
Editor.....Alicia M. Nails
Graphics.....Kimberly R. Ratcliff

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Detroit Housing Network

Third in a four-part series

Through an unprecedented collaboration announced in May, six nonprofits will receive \$2.2 million in invested dollars. This influx, to address Detroit's housing crisis, combines federal funds, and monies from the Rocket Community Fund, created by the Rock Family of Companies, which includes Rocket Mortgage by Quicken Loans.

"The Rocket Community Fund's investment leverages the City of Detroit Housing & Revitalization Department's investment of COVID-19 response dollars through the federal CARES Act," according to a City of Detroit press release announcing the program.

The six non-profits are operating as the Detroit Housing Network. Their mission is to "create healthy neighborhoods and advance racial equity in our communities by increasing housing stability and affordable homeownership for Detroit residents."

Funds will support a full range of housing and financial stability services, said Keegan Mahoney, Detroit Housing and Redevelopment Department program director for Policy and Implementation.

Collaboration is the key – and it happens on three levels. First, the City of Detroit, Rocket Community Fund, and CHN Housing Partners, an affordable housing developer and services provider, are collaborating to leverage and administer the funds.

Second, the six agencies will get new resources to build capacity and collaborate more closely. "The network expects to expand to additional nonprofit partners later in 2021," Mahoney said.

Third, each participating organization, which already provides a full complement of wraparound services, engages its own network of partners.

Low-income older adults will benefit from the property tax solutions and home repair assistance offered by the Detroit Housing Network. "When we look at the data, we see the majority of homeowners in Detroit are seniors, or will be," Mahoney said.

"Housing programs need to be highly responsive to reach seniors, who have been anchors of their neighborhoods for decades," he said. "If the hole in the roof makes the house unlivable, you don't just lose that resident. You lose the entire network of that senior's relationships," he said, adding, "then, multiply that – house by house, block by block."

Home repair is an early priority, Mahoney said, augmented by the certified housing counselors at each organization to provide and link services, including those the city and other agencies currently offer.

Detroit Network partners are well familiar with programs that make a difference, he said. "And because they are community-based, these organizations are also more likely to know about small businesses right in the neighborhood that can be engaged to assist.

"Our goal is to provide holistic, integrative services," Mahoney said. "The most important thing we are trying to address is the perception there is no help out there for residents struggling with housing stability. We want housing counseling to be highly visible and trusted. Ultimately, we are seeking to reduce housing instability in all its forms," he said.

Bridging Communities, a vital, bustling Southwest Detroit community-based organization, is one of the six nonprofits selected to launch the Detroit Housing Network. The multi-service agency supports seniors and their quality of life by surrounding its clients with coordinated resources and supports, ranging from eldercare to home repair and from help with property tax relief to intergenerational programming.

In many ways, Bridging Communities had been modeling the Detroit Housing Network framework for some time, said Executive Director Phyllis Edwards. "We are a one-stop shop," she noted.

The difference now, she said, is that Bridging Communities can work more closely with other organizations throughout the city in the strongest collaboration yet to focus on housing, while building capacity around its existing programs and community partnerships.

The six agencies meet virtually each month to problem-solve, share challenges and successes, as well as best practices..

"We look at the total picture of a person," Edwards said. "As an example, we can start by connecting our clients with housing services, and move forward to address other issues in their lives, using a case management approach."

Detroiters who are aging in place will greatly benefit from this new alliance, as will their communities. "Where would we be without seniors?" Edwards asked. "We need to stop discarding the wisdom from our neighborhoods."

For more information, contact any of the organizations listed here, or go to www.detroithousingnetwork.org.

Detroit Housing Network Members

Reach Detroit Housing Network agencies by contacting them directly or through www.detroithousingnetwork.org.

Bridging Communities Inc.

6900 McGraw Ave
Detroit, Mich. 48210
313-361-6377
www.bridgingcommunities.org

Central Detroit Christian CDC

1550 Taylor St
Detroit, Mich. 48206
313-873-0064
www.centraldetroitchristian.org

Jefferson East Inc.

14300 E. Jefferson Ave.
Detroit, Mich. 48215
313-314-6414
www.jeffersoneast.org

Matrix Human Services

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Detroit, Mich. 48205
313-526-4000
www.matrixhumanservices.org

U SNAP BAC

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Detroit, Mich. 48224
313-640-1100
www.usnapbac.org

Wayne Metro Community Action Agency

7310 Woodward Ave
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Federal Assistance for COVID-19 Funeral Expenses



Federal Funeral Assistance: The Federal Emergency Management Agency provides up to \$7,000 in financial reimbursement to assist with COVID-19 related funeral expenses incurred after January 20 of last year. Families must meet the following FEMA requirements:

- The death must have occurred in the United States, including U.S. territories.
- The death certificate must indicate the death was attributed to COVID-19.
- Applicant must be a U.S. citizen, non-citizen national, or qualified alien who incurred funeral expenses after January 20, 2020.
- There is no requirement for the deceased person to have been a U.S. citizen, non-citizen national, or qualified alien.

The following documentation will be required:

- An official death certificate attributing the death directly or indirectly to COVID-19.
- Funeral expense documents (receipts, funeral home contract, etc.) that include the applicant's name, the deceased person's name, the amount of funeral expenses, and the dates the funeral expenses were incurred.
- Proof of funds received from other sources. FEMA is not able to reimburse if it will duplicate benefits received from burial or funeral insurance, financial assistance received from voluntary agencies, government agencies, or other sources.

To apply for funeral expense reimbursement:

Online applications are not available. Call the COVID-19 Funeral Assistance Program at 844.684.6333 (or TTY: 800.462.7585), Monday-Friday, 9 a.m. - 9 p.m.

Calls should take about 20 minutes and it is important to have all necessary information and documentation on hand when you call. Once you have applied and are given an application number, you may provide supporting documentation to FEMA through fax, mail, or by uploading them to your account.

Call volumes are high, so if you're unable to get through, call back. There is no deadline to apply. Applicants have the option to receive funds via a mailed check or by direct deposit. Visit FEMA at www.fema.gov/disasters/coronavirus/economic/funeral-assistance.

Local Funeral Assistance:

The Wayne Metro Community Action Agency provides funeral assistance. Call 313.388.9799 or visit: <http://waynemetro.org/apply> to see if you are eligible.



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www.WayneMetro.org/PropertyTax

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www.WayneMetro.org

or call our CONNECT center at:

313-388-9799



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The Reverend – Doctor – Fuller: A virus expert on a spiritual mission



Photographed by Austin Thomason, University of Michigan

Ordained African Methodist Episcopal minister and expert virologist, A. Oveta Fuller, Ph.D., is able to comfort and reassure others while wearing either or both of her “hats.” A University of Michigan scientist who studies viruses, the professor teaches U-M medical, graduate, dental, and undergraduate students about human virus pathogens. Fuller’s laboratory team has published studies on herpes simplex and influenza viruses. She has also worked on the front lines, in various African nations, researching and educating to control the spread of HIV/AIDS – and assisting those in the community who are affected.

Her decades-long contributions to the National Institutes of Health and the National Science Foundation research led to her being tapped to serve on the U. S. Food and Drug Administration’s advisory panel to review authorization and licensing of COVID-19 vaccines. Fuller says the FDA review was just the first hurdle and that building public confidence will reduce vaccine hesitancy. UAN sat

down for a conversation with the spiritual leader and healer:

What do you feel is most important for people to know about the virus that causes COVID-19?

COVID-19 is a horrible disease that’s easily transmissible. The virus that causes COVID-19 is new. We don’t yet understand a lot about it. We’re learning as we go. What we do know is that it can cause havoc in the body. Some people get infected, have no symptoms, but they can infect others. And we don’t know if those asymptomatic people will experience any long-term effects. Others have mild or moderate cases. While they may not require hospitalization, they report experiencing the worst flu-like illnesses. And those infected can have long-lasting “long-hauler” symptoms that may include heart arrhythmias, brain fog, and joint pain that can last for months. Those with severe COVID-19, as we know, suffer greatly. We find that the vaccines are effective at stopping the disease symptoms, illness and death. Why would anyone risk these by not being vaccinated?

What are key myths, misinformation and disinformation about the vaccine?

People say we don’t know about side-effects. We do know. We know it may make you uncomfortable for a day or two, but that’s it. We also know that adverse effects from vaccines generally emerge within three to six months. We’re past that. With the J & J vaccine, where people experienced dangerous blood clots, we identified this rare effect in that time frame, and importantly, learned how to treat it. We recommend that you not schedule anything of importance the day after the vaccine and to take a Tylenol, Advil, or Aleve after, if you experience a headache or joint pain. Presence of short-term side effects means your body is recognizing the vaccine material and priming your immune defense system to handle the real virus.

Another concern is that people aren’t sure what’s in the vaccine. It’s not the virus. It’s a messenger RNA (mRNA) code, a small piece of material, used by our bodies to make proteins. A mRNA code

for a key virus protein is placed in a droplet of fat engulfed in sugar and water so it can enter some cells of our body. The vaccine is not the virus, but only a small key protein of the virus.

What are the other myths about the vaccines that you’d like to quash?

One myth is that the vaccines were developed too fast. Not true. The research that resulted in the vaccine had been done over a 30-year period. While the COVID-19 virus is a newly emerged virus, it’s similar to SARS and MERS — the coronaviruses that previously made the jump from animals to people.

Scientists weren’t starting from scratch. They only needed the genetic sequence of this new coronavirus for a vaccine and how to deliver it. The viral genome was sequenced and made available by mid-January 2020. The technology to deliver has been used for a while in cancer treatment.

In 2003, while developing the SARS vaccine, scientists identified the strategies and best potential targets for coronaviruses as the now well-known spike protein.



Dr. Kizzmekia Corbett, an African-American virologist at the National Institutes of Health, was studying coronavirus spikes before the pandemic started and was already working on what to use in vaccines.

Continued on next page



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Strategies learned from SARS research gave her and other scientists a viable vaccine target to allow manufacturers to expedite development. This enabled Moderna to have a vaccine for clinical trials as early as mid-March 2020 — just as the initial wave of infections was visibly sweeping through major U.S. cities.

There was unprecedented cooperation among scientists who had been working on different elements of an mRNA vaccine. Generally, scientists work on projects somewhat independently.

Because we were in a crisis, scientists shared efforts and the government made the research possible with uninterrupted funding. Also unprecedented was the government's early order and payment to the manufacturers.

Studies continue now about whether the vaccine stops virus reproduction and the duration of disease protection. Also, we don't know if we will need periodic COVID-19 vaccine boosters.

Were steps in the clinical trials skipped?

No. Normally, vaccines are developed over a five-year period with 6,000 subjects followed annually

for a total of 30,000 possible cases. As we were in a global COVID-19 crisis, the trials enrolled and followed 30,000 persons over a four-month period for the two-dose vaccines, and 60,000 persons in the J & J trials. Prior to these large group clinical trials, per the standard process, the vaccines went through Phase 1 to determine safety; Phase 2 to determine efficacy; and then the larger group Phase 3 study to assess safety and efficacy with a wider range of people. After meeting requirements, data from vaccine clinical trials was submitted for review by the FDA. VRBPAC, the independent scientific advisory panel that I am a part of, was asked to consider each vaccine for Emergency Use Authorization. EUA approvals mean that the effective vaccines will be used and closely surveilled with continued data collection before full licensing. Approximately 10% of clinical study participants were African American. Moderna intentionally included participants with underlying health conditions and some who had COVID-19 previously.

What would you say to those with health conditions that make them hesitate to take the shot?

People with underlining conditions are the least likely to survive COVID-19 disease because their bodies can't handle the additional energy stress

that virus reproduction creates. They need to be the first in line for a COVID-19 vaccine. Also, some people say they would prefer to have the natural immunity that comes with being infected with the SARS-2 [COVID-19] virus. You don't want to do this because of the risk, and because the immunity that results is not as protective. Others say they will just continue to hibernate. We can't do that -- it's not healthy mentally or spiritually, nor is it practical!

Can you still get COVID-19 after being vaccinated?

While there have been some breakthrough cases for those fully vaccinated, no vaccine is 100 percent effective, these cases are mild. Being vaccinated reduces the chances of disease, hospitalization, long-term effects and even death.

I encourage people to seek and make an informed decision to get a COVID-19 vaccination. Do it for themselves and as a good neighbor. Also, make and implement an infection prevention plan. Masks and distancing, especially indoors with multiple households present, are still recommended.

And remember, the new SARS coronavirus-2 [which causes COVID-19] is still here and may continue to be with us to reproduce itself.

Respite POSSIBLE!

An Affordable Adult Day Center

By Trudy Gallant-Stokes

Invisible Army: Caregivers on the Front Lines

This story was produced through the New York & Michigan Solutions Journalism Collaborative, a partnership of news organizations and universities dedicated to rigorous and compelling reporting about successful responses to social problems. The group is supported by the Solutions Journalism Network.

The collaborative's first series, Invisible Army: Caregivers on the Front Lines, focuses on potential solutions to challenges facing caregivers of older adults.

Keeping up with the changing needs of a loved one with dementia while preserving your own mental and physical health is a perpetual juggling act for caregivers. Your loved one constantly needs your attention, yet you also have other responsibilities. And while friends and family may encourage you to take a break to take care of yourself, how do you safely do that?

Respite care - short-term relief for caregivers - is an option. But for middle- and low-income families, the cost of adult day programs can be a barrier. A recent study by AARP and the National Alliance for Caregiving found that only 14% of caregivers use respite services despite the fact that more than twice that amount -- 38% -- felt they needed it.

The DayBreak program was created to fill that need in Detroit. DayBreak, a unique service of the acclaimed Hannan Center, which has served seniors since 1924, provides comprehensive yet flexible hours of respite care at affordable prices for seniors living with dementia or needing assistance with Activities of Daily Living. ADLs can include walking, using the restroom, eating, and/or communicating.

Vincent Tilford, executive director of the Hannan Center, says that thanks to support from the City of Detroit, the Detroit Area Agency on Aging and the Michigan Alzheimer's Association, DayBreak is able to provide a 5:1 patient/staff ratio, and flexible service hours. Costs are on a sliding scale and financial assistance is sometimes available. The charge can be as little as \$5-\$8 hour, which

person that they're trying to help. Or they are neglecting their own health in the process just because they're not able to do all the other things that they need to do; that's why we call it DayBreak."

Belinda Croft, BSW DayBreak program manager, says the program follows strict COVID-19 protocols in its dedicated space and offers

and I have an art therapist that comes in once a week as well."

Croft adds that there are opportunities for participants to safely help with meal prep and cooking and plans are in the works for music therapy. There are special spaces in the facility if an older adult becomes over stimulated or is tired and just needs some supervised quiet time. DayBreak can also assist families in other ways, including connecting them to other community and elder law services, as well as transportation, which is a major issue for some families.

The program has been a godsend for people like Constance Brown, whose mother has been a participant.

"I ain't going to lie, it's hard," says Brown, who is on her third round and 12th year of caregiving. She took care of her late father and grandmother, and for the last five years, her mother. She appreciates DayBreak because, "They do stuff with her that I don't do. We go for walks and do stuff like go to Belle Isle or go to church, but they engage



is less than half of what's usually charged at other facilities. He calls respite care vital for participants and caregivers, saying, "Often the person who is taking care or supporting that other person is sicker than the

a wide variety of activities during the day for older adults directed by highly trained staff. "We have a Tai Chi instructor that comes in once a week, we have an exercise fitness person that comes in twice a week,

Continued on next page

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her in music, dancing, art and she likes the other people. They get each other.”

The respite care gives Brown time to run errands or just have a moment of “me” time, all while knowing her mother is in good hands, having a enjoyable day. “It stimulates my mom’s mind, it keeps her busy. I love it,” she says. Gerontologists suggest using a check list when considering an adult day program. Consider variables like: What are the hours? How flexible are they? Are there stimulating programs? And most importantly, check out the cleanliness of the facility and the experience level of the staff.

DayBreak offers complimentary trial days. It’s a great way to see if the program is a good fit for your loved one. For more information on the program contact Belinda Croft, BSW, DayBreak Manager at 313.831.4999 or bcroft@hannan.org. Hannan Center is located at 4750 Woodward Avenue, Detroit, Michigan 48201. For more information on the center, see www.hannan.org/daybreak.



Celebration for the Renovation of Hannan Center

The staff of the newly renovated Hannan Center, which was formerly Hannan House, invites the public for food, fun, music, giveaways and building tours.

The celebration will also include an art exhibit, free classes and workshops, memory screenings and more. It will be held **Friday, July 23 and Saturday, July 24**. Here’s what’s happening:

Friday, July 23, 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.

- Building Tours: Check out the new Hannan Center, including the Kayrod Gallery, classrooms, The Black Box Theater, a podcast studio, and the DayBreak Adult Day Center for older adults living with dementia or other challenges.
- Free classes and workshops including: Creative Aging, Medicare, Caregiving/Dementia, Food as Medicine, and more.
- Memory and depression screenings.

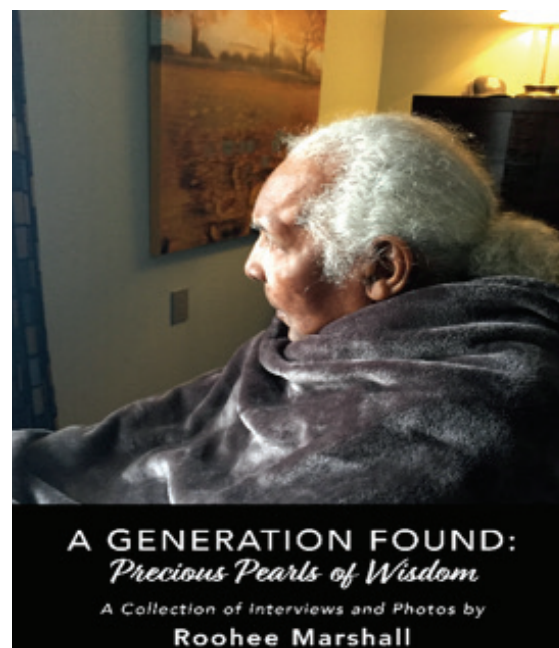
Saturday, July 24, 1 p.m. – 8 p.m.

- Building tours
- Hands-on art workshops: Let your inner artist out! No experience necessary!
- Spoken word and open mic in Hannan Center’s Black Box Theater
- Memory and depression screenings
- Emerge! Art Festival: Juried art exhibit highlighting the work of older adult artists
- Emerge! Afterglow: “Music, Mingling and Merlot”

Hannan Center is located at 4750 Woodward Avenue, Detroit, Michigan 48201. For more information, visit: www.hannan.org, or call: 313.833.1300.



The Most Precious Pearls are Wisdom



A Generation Found: Precious Pearls of Wisdom is a beautifully photographed coffee table book by writer-photographer Roohee Marshall that’s dedicated to the wit and achievements of both renowned and unsung Black seniors. The book also contains coveted historical pictures.

The colorful book includes a collection of interviews with elders, between the ages of 80 and 108, who talk about love, raising a family and what sustains them. They speak to their challenges, accomplishments, and offer precious pearls of wisdom.

For further information or to order books, go to www.RooheeMarshall.com, call 734.249.9984, or email rooheesbooks@gmail.com.

SENIOR VOICES - The Value of Vaccines

Senior Voices is a series, sponsored by the Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan - Detroit Journalism Engagement Fund, to amplify the marginalized voices of seniors and those who serve them.



Christine Bond

Retired librarian and Head Start teacher, Christine Bond, says she had reservations about the vaccine, but that thinking about her underlying health conditions helped her make the decision to be vaccinated - at over 70 years of age.

"I knew I was at great risk if I were not vaccinated. Friends and family who were hesitant told me they would consider it if things turned out well for me. After a month or so, I reminded them of their hesitation and said, 'You see, I'm fine, what are you going to do?' Several were vaccinated. Even with being fully vaccinated, I'm not 100% comfortable going back to pre-COVID life, so I only go to the grocery store and to church where we're socially distanced. I wish the vaccination rates were higher so we could be comfortable living our full lives."

Johnnie Jones

Retired City of Detroit employee, Johnnie Jones, 71, says a new administration in Washington and doing his own due diligence led him to get the shot.

"The science and my personal research convinced me to get vaccinated. While the previous president was in office, I was leery. The scientists were being muzzled. Once Biden took office, I continued to research and concluded that it was legitimate, safe and effective. I understand our community's hesitancy, but I encourage people who are hesitant to do some researching, reading and to re-consider for the safety of themselves, their family, and people they come in contact with."



Beverly R. Williams

Working with the Adams Butzel Complex's senior activities and food program, Beverly R. Williams says she takes the opportunity to discuss vaccine hesitancy with the seniors and cautions that the pandemic is not over just yet.

"Whenever I get the opportunity, because it's a personal matter, I ask my seniors to explain their hesitation. Some say they just don't trust the government; some say scientists are still learning; and others say the vaccine came too fast. A lot of this is confusing. Most who have not been vaccinated are not refusing to take it but are waiting until more is known. I gently encourage them to think about it seriously. It's killed people you know, and it could kill you. It's still out there."

SENIOR VOICES - The Value of Vaccines

Senior Voices is a series, sponsored by the Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan - Detroit Journalism Engagement Fund, to amplify the marginalized voices of seniors and those who serve them.



Jack Taylor Jones

Lighthouse Christian Stores owner, Jack Taylor Jones, who is 68, says because she serves the public, she got vaccinated to protect her customers as well as her family.

"I believe people should read and educate themselves about the vaccine. There are so many sources for good, solid and evidence-based information. Reading and learning from reliable experts and considering how you can have no symptoms and still pass it on to your loved ones, just might change your mind."

Jack Taylor Jones shows off her new location's show room. Lighthouse Christian Stores is located on the Avenue of Fashion at 18647 Livernois Ave., two blocks south of 7 Mile Road.

Eldercaring Coordination Settles Family Feuds

By Marvin Pride Jr.



"Eldercaring coordination is different when the conflict, rather than the [care] issues, become the driving force of the family and/or the litigation process," said Linda Fieldstone, co-chair of the Association for Conflict Resolution Elder Justice Initiative on Eldercaring Coordination. She developed the approach over more than 25 years in the Miami-Dade court system.

Eldercaring coordination is being brought to the Detroit area by the Southeast Michigan Senior Regional Collaborative and the Neighborhood Legal Services' Great Lakes Mediation Division. In January, the Michigan Health Endowment Fund gave the program a grant. This fall, training on high-conflict issues is to begin for judges, coordinators and others. Full implementation is scheduled for 2022.

A new method of conflict resolution called eldercaring coordination is coming to Michigan – and the method has been highly effective in other states when family conflict takes center stage and caregiving suffers. Eldercaring coordination is a court-ordered dispute resolution process. It addresses abuse and neglect; it helps get elders out of unsafe environments and reduces their risk for abuse and neglect.

Eldercaring coordination is a last resort in the conflict resolution hierarchy which starts with a simple conflict and then escalates to elder mediation. But when issues get so extreme that talking is not effective anymore or when mediation has failed to resolve problems, then eldercaring coordination is used. Under court order, families attend meetings for two years which are frequent at first but less often as the process progresses. During that time, eldercaring coordinators remain available, including when new conflicts arise.

Michigan joins six other states that are turning to coordination for high-risk conflicts. Senior Regional Collaborative Program Coordinator Julie Lowenthal said she is excited this program is being introduced here because, it's "been proven to be very effective. It's getting the cost away from the legal litigation and helping families be able to solve issues, with resources provided to them as well."

Continued on Page 15



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Now What? A Guide to the Gifts and Challenges of Aging



Are you struggling at times with navigating the landscape of the aging process, for either yourself or a loved one? Would it help to have a guidebook for your journey? "Now What? A Guide to the Gifts and Challenges of Aging" is just that book.

Chapters cover everything from downsizing, to home safety, to staying active, to hospice care.

Now What? provides helpful information that you can begin using today.

Developed with input from several Detroit-based nonprofits and authored by writers from around the globe, Now What? has local, national, and global relevance. To order your copy, for \$19.99, visit www.healthyagingbook.com, or call 313.283.6757.

Continued from page 13

Eldercaring coordination is a two-year program ordered by a judge after conversation and mediation have failed, the family member is being neglected and/or family members cannot talk to each other.

The first step of eldercaring coordination is an orientation followed by a period of engagement in which coordinators help families plan a course of action, using the tools they have learned. Finally, the family applies the plan that the eldercaring coordinator has put into place.

Eldercaring coordinators help clarify confusion and reduce family stress. They keep the focus on safety, minimizing health risks and improving well-being. Coordinators must be certified. They must have experience working with high-conflict families as well as a master's degree. In addition, a regulatory board licenses coordinators to ensure they work ethically with families, and coordinators follow Association for Conflict Resolution guidelines. Fees are set on a sliding scale and are covered by the family as well as by scholarships ordered by the judge.

What are the benefits?

Eldercaring coordination aims to lower stress, foster self-determination, isolate problems and ensure elders' safety. The process addresses a full range of issues over that two-year timeframe, and the benefits of improved communication alleviate future problems -- even benefitting future generations.

"Eldercaring coordination helps prepare elders and families to work with each other and avoids delays to make better decisions," Fieldstone said.

What the experts say

Pamela Teasster, director of the Virginia Tech Center of Gerontology, researched the effectiveness of this approach. She found that 100% of the judges she studied who had ordered eldercaring coordination reported that it was effective.

Her research found that 82% of pilot site administrators reported that eldercaring coordination was somewhat effective for families enrolled in the programs.

Lowenthal said, "Eldercaring coordination was recognized by the United Nations as an 'action to an awareness' model for the welfare of aging persons." The UN observes Elder Abuse Day annually. Eldercaring coordination is being considered by other countries, including Australia.

For more information about eldercaring coordination, contact Senior Regional Collaborative Program Coordinator Julie Lowenthal at 888-341-8593 ext. 4, or jlowenthal@miseniors.org. Information can also be found on the Southeast Michigan Senior Regional Collaborative's "Eldercaring Coordination" tab.

This story is a project of the Michigan State University School of Journalism and Urban Aging News partnership to introduce students of color to journalism about aging and related issues.



Chromebooks for the Seniors at St. Pat's

St. Patrick Senior Center helped members start up or improve their internet access this spring, distributing 101 Samsung Chromebook laptops. The computers were donated by the United Way of Southeast Michigan and the Detroit Area Agency on Aging. New owners were also provided with set-up and training from the St. Pat's staff and from nursing students.

Pictured (L-R) St. Pat's Executive Director Sa'Trice Coleman-Betts with Pat Lofton, a very satisfied customer.

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The Aging Mastery Playbook

By Sharon R. Williams

Aging demographics can be startling: 10,000 U.S. Baby Boomers age into Medicare every day! The U.S. Census predicts that by 2030, 85-year-olds will comprise the largest age demographic in the country. But, living longer comes with blessings as well as challenges.

Efforts to remain socially engaged have been challenging for everyone because of pandemic mandated physical distancing practices. Social isolation can be particularly damaging for older adults. This isolation has been linked to many health conditions such as lower immune function, hypertension, earlier onset of dementia, etc. Studies further indicate that isolation and loneliness impact health as adversely as obesity or smoking. Susan Stiles, senior director of Product Development and Strategy at the National Council on Aging, cited a 2017 AARP study noting Medicare spends an estimated \$6.7 billion in additional healthcare costs each year on socially isolated older adults.

Recognizing a gap in programming focused on social support for retirement and aging transition, Jim Firman, former CEO of the NCOA, organized the research and eventual development of a remarkable resource, the Aging Mastery Program®. This unique, evidence-informed program has been

utilized by 25,000 people across the country. It offers a proven solution to life planning that can be used to help navigate pre-retirement or retirement years. The premise of Aging Mastery is that older adults can enhance their quality of life by taking charge of their health and well-being via positive behavior change.

Firman assembled senior center representatives, aging services leaders, behavioral economists, other experts, and potential participants to design a user-friendly, effective curriculum. The name Aging Mastery was suggested by a team from the senior centers, and the development of the program adhered to the credo "For us, by us," promoting the belief that retirement is not the end of active living, but a pathway for setting new purposes and seeking new paths to remain active and engaged.

Stiles indicated that Aging Mastery provides instruction on what people can do to be healthier and more economically secure through the years. Aging Mastery offers two participation options. The primary model is a 10-part curriculum. Classes are offered in-person or online and the in-person curriculum successfully converted to virtual during COVID-19. Lessons include:

- Navigating Longer Lives
- Exercise and You
- Nutrition
- Sleep
- Financial Fitness
- Advance Care Planning
- Healthy Relationships
- Financial Fitness
- Medication Management
- Community Engagement

The Aging Mastery® Starter Kit is a do-it-yourself model that can be used for self-study or the basis for a virtual book club. Starter kits are available at <http://store.agingmastery.com>.

Research and participant surveys show that AMP alumni increase physical activity, embrace healthy nutrition, execute advance care plans, and increase social connectedness.



Visit the video link: www.bit.ly/AMPTestimony for testimonials. Or, for more information, visit: www.ncoa.org/article/welcome-to-aging-mastery

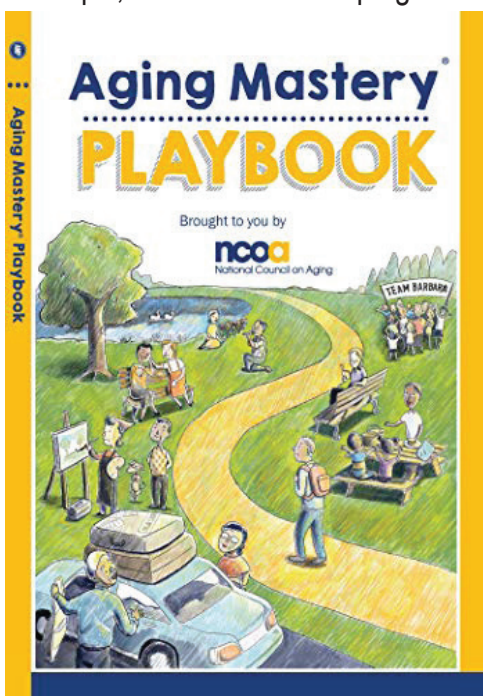
Aging Mastery will be available soon locally via these certified providers:

Area Agency on Aging 1-B:
wellnessprograms@aaa1b.org or 833.262.2200

Detroit Area Agency on Aging:
www.detroit seniorsolution.org or 313.446.4444

The Helm at the Boll Life Center:
www.helmlife.org or 313.882.9600

Sharon Williams is an enterprising leader in the health care and community-based services industries. She has led transformative initiatives with the Senior Resource Center, SE Michigan; Detroit Area Agency on Aging; and the NCOA-Aging Mastery Program. She is the CEO of Williams Jaxon Consulting, LLC and can be reached at sharonr.williams@comcast.net



CAREGIVER SUPPORT

Train for Awareness: Michigan Attorney General Dana Nessel announced a new series of training videos from Michigan's Elder Abuse Task Force to educate in-home caregivers for older and vulnerable adults. The 11 short sessions can be helpful to those concerned about the physical, emotional or financial well-being of an older adult. The training, via the department's YouTube channel, focuses on recognizing, reporting and preventing elder abuse, neglect and exploitation. See: www.bit.ly/ElderAbuseTaskForceTraining

Henry Ford C.A.R.E. Program: The Caregiver Assistance Resources and Education Program® is open to anyone in the community. One-on-one meetings by telephone, support groups and children's art sessions are also available. Offered virtually, programs highlight self-care with educational sessions focusing on health and wellness of caregivers, patients and family members. To learn more, visit <https://www.henryford.com/visitors/caregivers> for the current schedule, email CaregiverResources@hfhs.org, or call 866. 574.7530 for consultations and registration. Participants can join by telephone, computer, tablet, or iPad.

National Kidney Foundation Workshops: If you are living with chronic pain, or type 2 diabetes, consider taking free a Personal Action Toward Health workshop presented by the National Kidney Foundation of Michigan. A PATH facilitator works with groups to explore skills and tools to help with specific health issues so that care-recipients and caregivers can each lead healthier lives. The online classes are open to Michigan residents with an internet connection on a computer, tablet or smartphone. Visit nkfm.org/PATH or mihealthyprograms.org, or email pathprograms@nkfm.org, or call 800.482.1455 for more information.

Alzheimer's Association Outings: The Alzheimer's Association of Greater Michigan Chapter's Community Connect program offers social and cultural outings for caregivers and care-recipients. Venues including the Detroit Zoo, the Henry Ford, the DIA and more have been offered virtually, but the Association is transitioning to include in-person events. Call the Association's 24/7 Helpline to learn when activities begin at 800.272.3900.

COVID-19 RESOURCES

City of Detroit COVID-19 Vaccine: To learn about vaccine scheduling and COVID-19 testing, call 313.230.0505, or text 313.217.3732 for the closest locations. If needed, ask about free transportation and wheelchair-accessible accommodations through Lyft and Uber ride services.

In-Home Vaccinations: The Detroit Area Agency on Aging has information on scheduling in-home vaccines for the homebound. Call 313.446.4444 for information about Detroit, Highland Park, Harper Woods, Hamtramck and the Grosse Pointes.

Other resources include:

Wayne County Homebound vaccine scheduling: 313.923.7531

COVID-19 testing: Wayne, Oakland and Macomb residents call 313.230.0505

Detroit COVID-19 Hotline: Call 313. 876.4000, staffed by a registered nurse, for information

State of Michigan Hotline: For testing and vaccination locations and scheduling, call 888-535-6136. Available Monday-Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. and 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday and Sunday.

MENTAL HEALTH

In This Together: A Pandemic Check-in: Hannan Center offers monthly sessions virtually for older adults to connect and support each other. It is an opportunity to share concerns, successes, stories, and lessons learned. Sessions also include information on self-care, well-being and the most current data and resources regarding the pandemic. To register and receive the private Zoom link or call-in number, contact Daniel Horrigan at dhorrigan@hannan.org or 313.908.0183 for dates and times.

TRANSPORTATION

Independence Rides: This membership-based transportation service for seniors and the visually impaired needs volunteer drivers. Drivers undergo training and background checks. New riders are accepted based on driver availability. For details, visit: www.independencerides.com, or call 313.618.1578.

NEWS BRIEFS

OUT & ABOUT: WALKS, VOLUNTEERING, FUN & EXPLORATION

ARISE Detroit! Neighborhoods Day: Block clubs, churches and community groups, it's time for the annual ARISE Detroit! Neighborhoods Day **Saturday, August 7**. Now in its 15th year, the popular citywide event features more than 100 activities and community service projects that project pride in the city through volunteer beautification and blight removal. Participating projects include art exhibits and music festivals, school supply giveaways, and much more all around the city. This year's event is being held following all state, local and federal safety protocols, due to the pandemic, including vaccinations for volunteers, mask wearing and social distancing for those not vaccinated. All groups that register and pay to participate by July 15 will receive custom-made banners with their organization's name, cleanup bags for blight removal projects, marketing support and other incentives. Groups can register for \$25 at www.arisedetroit.org to host events on August 7 or throughout August, to receive Neighborhoods Day incentives.

Seniors & Sneakers on the Riverfront: This senior walking program is held 8 a.m. to 10 a.m., Tuesdays June 8 through August 24, for those age 55 and above. The free program encourages wellness through walking the Detroit RiverWalk, fitness classes, health education, and surprises throughout the summer at the Cullen Plaza near the Ferris wheel. Masks are strongly encouraged. Limited parking is available and giveaways are first come, first served despite required pre-registration. To register, visit Seniors & Sneakers on the Riverfront on Eventbrite where you must register for each session you plan to attend.

More Americans are living with the disease. Many families and friends are serving as Alzheimer's caregivers. Death rates from Alzheimer's continue to climb, and the costs are unsustainable. The Alzheimer's Association **Walk to End Alzheimer's** will host the Detroit Walk to End Alzheimer's in-person at the Detroit Zoo on Oct. 30, 2021. The event raises critical funds for dementia care, support and research. Form a team and visit act.alz.org/detroit to sign.



30-day Strides for Seniors: Every September the Detroit Area Agency on Aging, Detroit Parks & Recreation and St. Patrick Senior Center present a 30-day Strides for Seniors campaign to promote the city's neighborhood senior centers. The services, activities, wellness programs, fun and friendship provided at the centers are enriching for aging Detroiters and their quality of life. Plans are underway for the 2021 celebration offering a combination of live and virtual events. Keep up with plans for the fall event at www.stridesforseniors.org or call 313.833.0082.

Beacon Park Survey Team: Volunteers are needed to conduct surveys on-site during events, for two-to-three-hour shifts, from June through December. Surveys will be used to plan future programming to make the park a space that appeals to all visitors. Volunteers receive a Beacon Park t-shirt, hat, and a Visa Gift Card. Students can submit hours towards their volunteer requirements. If interested, email madeline.miller@dteenergy.com, or megan.heeres@dteenergy.com.

Afternoons with Hood Research: For stimulating discussion, call in to Afternoons with Hood Research for lively conversations, socializing and human interaction. Dial in to 978.990.5000, access code 338729# on Saturdays from 2-6 p.m.

LEGAL

Health Care Power of Attorney: The health care power of attorney is sometimes called the patient advocate designation. A health care POA gives a patient's advocate the power to make decisions about their physical and mental health care. It can include specific instructions about the kinds of health care decisions desired. A copy of the form should be on file with the patient's healthcare providers.

Financial Power of Attorney: An alternative to putting a family member's name on a bank account is to create a financial power of attorney. This document allows the designated agent to write checks and manage money while both parties avoid liability for the other's debt and avoid financial exploitation. To learn more, contact the Elder Law Advocacy Center at 313.937.8291.

LIFELONG LEARNING

Gardening Lunch & Learn: Learn to grow vegetables at Morning Side community's Emerald Gardens on Wednesdays in June and July. Activities include: Lunch at noon, vegetable gardening tips at 1 p.m., and Medicare 2021 highlights at 2 p.m. Bring your gardening tools and gloves to help with the vegetable garden crops that will be donated to volunteers and neighbors needing fresh, healthy food. The garden is at 4716 Haverhill, Detroit, Mich. 48224.

Plan for Your Lifespan: To have your voice heard throughout your lifespan, the Plan Your Lifespan website shows how to plan for unexpected health events. This planning differs from wills and end-of-life care considerations and focuses on connecting to services and resources to enhance life. Considerations include rehabilitation options after a hospitalization, fall prevention and other tips for living longer. See: www.planyourlifespan.org.

Healthier Black Elder Center Lunch & Learn: Community education for seniors across metro Detroit focusing on health and wellbeing. Held at various public spaces, each event focuses on a health-related topic with invited speakers, resource tables, and health screenings. A new segment titled Critical Crossroads engages the community in conversations, advocacy, and strategies around social injustice issues. For the fall 2021 schedule or to learn how you can join, call 313.664.2616.

FOOD

Put more food on your table with SNAP: The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program helps those with limited income buy the food they need to stay healthy. The National Kidney Foundation of Michigan walks Michigan seniors, age 60 and older, through the process of applying for benefits. Call 313.259.1574, ext. 3160 or email SNAP@NKFM.org to apply.

PRESCRIPTIONS & MEDICAL SUPPLIES

Medical Supply Assistance: There's help for those with Type 2 diabetes who are having trouble affording insulin. They can contact World Medical Relief and ask about the Affordable Prescription Program to receive both medication and education. The agency also offers male and female incontinence supplies – many free of charge. Medical supplies and wound care supplies are available at a reasonable cost. Contact the agency Monday-Friday, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m., at 313.866.5333, by email, info@worldmedicalrelief.org, or visit www.worldmedicalrelief.org/

RESOURCES FOR LIVING

Living Assistance Grants: Those who are no longer able to live independently, yet cannot afford assisted living, home care services, or who have an emergent need, can apply to the Next Steps 4 Seniors Foundation for assistance. To learn eligibility requirements or to apply call 248.651.5010, or online at: www.nextsteps4seniorsfoundation.org

Healthy Senior Living Initiative Assistance: Help is available for Detroit residents ages 55+ who are uninsured or under-insured and who have diabetes, pre-diabetes, obesity, hypertension or high cholesterol. The program offers groceries and delivery, health screenings including transportation, and case coordination. Call 313.526.4000 ext. 1253 to learn more.

SCSEP: the Senior Community Service Employment Program, is a work-based job training program. To learn more about this service for low-income, unemployed older adults, contact:

Detroit Urban League: Carolyn Ralls: 313.831.5504 or Carolyn.ralls@deturbanleague.org

AARP Foundation: Jewell Johnson: 313.964.4821 or jjohnsom314@aarpfdnscsep.org

Detroit Area Agency on Aging: Lisa Jackson: 313.446.4444 ext. 5849 or jacksonl@daaa1a.org

The Connect 313 fund: an effort to ensure Detroiters access the digital world, is providing enrollment support, assistance with navigating communication with internet service providers, or identification of new providers for residents interested in the FCC's new Emergency Broadband Benefit. A \$50 per month subsidy for internet access and a one-time \$100 subsidy for a device are available. To qualify, call 313.24.7618, or visit: getemergencybroadband.org

Words of Wisdom: A Doctor Speaks on Self Care for the Caregiver

By Sheria Robinson-Lane, PhD., RN



When is the last time you slept and awakened feeling rested and renewed? Are you getting enough sleep? The average person needs at least eight hours of sleep while some need nine.

Sometimes as we get older and our health isn't what it used to be, bathroom needs or pain may interrupt our sleep, or perhaps we just have a lot on our mind, which makes it hard to get settled. Home remedies help, like an Epsom salt bath before bed, having half of a banana as an evening snack, or a glass of coconut water in the late afternoon. Taking prescribed pain medication before bed has become an important part of the evening routine for many as well.

However, the single most important self-care activities you can do include being sure to make it to your annual doctor's appointment and speaking to your doctor about any and all concerns you may have.

Further, engaging with organizations that support homebound seniors can make it a lot easier to get

the help you need and feel more supported -- more comfortable taking breaks to care for yourself. Your local Area Agency on Aging is a great connection for helping you identify resources that are available to you and/or the person you are caring for. You deserve to rest. You deserve self-care. Treat yourself accordingly.

Dr. Sheria Robinson-Lane is a gerontologist, researcher and assistant professor at the University of Michigan School of Nursing with expertise in palliative care, long-term care, and nursing administration. Her research is focused on reducing health disparities for minority older adults with cognitive impairments and their informal caregivers. Her current research project seeks African American and Black men and women ages 18 years and older who regularly care for spouses, relatives, partners, or friends, age of 55 or older, who have regular forgetfulness or confusion. To learn more, call 734.764.9280, or email: umsn-caregiverstudies@med.umich.edu

Summer is finally here in the Midwest! And so, too, come the longest days of the year. Following a winter packed full of isolation, grief, and loss related to the COVID-19 pandemic, most of us welcome long warm summer days and perhaps the beginning of the return of some bits of normalcy.

For those of us who are caring for loved ones with cognitive or mental health disorders, such as dementia, our normal may not look like everyone else's normal. Many of us already have fairly long days, as a result of our caregiving responsibilities. After all, someone must see to it that our loved ones eat, are cleaned and groomed, are safe, and hopefully, happy. That is why it is important for us to take good care of ourselves as well.

As you contemplate plans for the days ahead, I encourage you to deeply consider how you are prioritizing your own mental health. When is the last time you did something for you and only you?





The Grip Strength Study

SEEKING CAREGIVERS OF PERSONS WITH DEMENTIA

A researcher at the University of Michigan School of Nursing seeks African American/Black men and women ages 18 and older, in Southeast Michigan, who regularly care for spouses, relatives, partners, or friends, age of 55 or older, who have regular forgetfulness or confusion. The person being cared for may have a diagnosis such as:

- Dementia
- Alzheimer's Disease
- Lewy Body Dementia
- Parkinson's Disease
- Vascular Dementia
- Frontal Temporal Dementia

We would like you to complete a survey, collect your weight and bp measurements.
Time required: Approximately 1.5 hours

Compensation: \$50 in gift cards, digital scale and blood pressure cuff
Survey link: <http://bit.ly/UMGripStudy>



For more information, please contact:
Sheria Robinson-Lane, Ph.D., RN
Principal Investigator
Email: umsn-caregiverstudies@med.umich.edu
Phone: 734-764-9280





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