

SENIOR CONNECTION

Information for Seniors & Caregivers

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...And Information for All.

by Robert P. Dwyer, Ph.D., Executive Director



I've noticed that "makeovers" are all the rage on television lately. Men and women with outdated wardrobes and hairstyles find a television show that will offer them a completely new look. Apparently this promises a new life, of sorts, maybe an enhanced relationship with their significant other, even the admiration of their friends.

I should be so lucky!

Now, sometimes a makeover really makes sense. As with our web site. Recent visitors to our SeniorConnection.org web site will notice a complete makeover of our presence on the Internet. We've modernized our look, incorporating our new logo and color, as well as a plethora of information to help all of us learn more about CMAA, Central

Massachusetts, seniors, caregivers and the aging network.

Yet, and more important, the SeniorConnection.org makeover looked to make the website more accessible to all visitors, using assistive technology to make our information available and understandable to those with disabilities. Certainly, under Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act as amended in 1998, federal agencies must develop their electronic communications to be as accessible as possible.

But we're not a federal agency. We are a private, non-profit agency. Even so, we believe that our information is important and helpful to ALL persons, particularly those who belong to the disability community. Working with our web designer, Ashdown Technologies of Milford, we have been able to re-create SeniorConnection.org in such a way that even electronic readers can turn the words on the site into audible words.

It's obvious that technology changes rapidly. Our goal here at CMAA is to continually work to make SeniorConnection.org more accessible, making it grow into a site that will be a resource

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for all who need it. In order to do this, we will have to keep up with changes and be open to technological improvements. This will take an investment of resources, both in time and money.

OK....so this is where I invite you to help. Let's talk about the investment of time. Volunteers and interns have already invested many hours in helping in the research and implementation of this "makeover." This then means that if you have an interest in the Internet and have some expertise that might help us, you need to give me a phone call.

On the other hand, if you see this as an important issue and want to assist us, but know little or nothing about computers, your donation can help further this cause. The equation seems to be "technology + money = technological progress", and any offering you make will help. All of human services has been negatively impacted by budget cuts and declining revenues. Yet your help can move this innovation, and accessibility, closer to reality.

Right. So "makeovers" are here to stay, in pop-culture and in technology. SeniorConnection.org is our example. Visit our site soon, and tell us what you like, or don't like. Let us know what you think and how you feel. But if nothing else, visit and learn so that we can "Help You at the Cross Roads of Elder Care."

SeniorConnection.org has been Bobby approved!

Bobby is a comprehensive web accessibility software tool designed to help expose and repair barriers to accessibility and encourage compliance with existing accessibility guidelines. According to the website <http://bobby.watchfire.com/bobby/html/en/index.jsp>, Bobby tests web pages using the guidelines established by the World Wide Web Consortium's (W3C) Web Access Initiative (WAI), as well as Section 508 guidelines from the Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board (Access Board) of the U.S. Federal Government. We are proud to be Bobby "Triple A and 508" Approved!



The SHINE Program - Serving the Health Information Needs of Elders - is looking for volunteers.

SHINE Volunteers work at various Senior Centers answering questions about Health Insurance and other related issues. We are potentially having a training program this Fall. Please call Ellin Hassett or Renee McCue-Hall if interested in learning more about this program. 1(800)243-4636 option 2.



Ginny Soma

On July 1, 2003, Central Massachusetts Agency on Aging welcomed Ginny Soma as the new Bookkeeper of the agency.

Ginny has an Associates Degree in Accounting from Assumption College and has held Accounting Positions in various industries. Most recently, she was employed at the Piccadilly Pub in Westborough as the Bookkeeper/Office Manager until its closing last year. She also worked at the YMCA in Framingham as the Staff Accountant and in the Finance Department at a local high-tech manufacturer for over 10 years.

In addition to her position at CMAA, Ginny is employed as a Bookkeeper for a Commercial and Residential Architect in Marlborough. In her spare time, Ginny enjoys cooking and playing golf.

Ginny resides in Shrewsbury with her husband Richard, son Alex and dog, Albert.

Hearing Loss and Communication Video Now on Line!

CMAA is pleased to announce that we have added to our Connection for Caregivers Site Videos page, a new video resource called: *Are You Sure They Can Hear You?-Communicating With People With Hearing Loss*. The video was produced by Susan V. Rezen, Ph.D., CCC-A, of the Communication Sciences and Disorders Department of Worcester State College. According to Dr. Rezen, "This video is for anyone who wants to communicate with someone with hearing loss. It can be used by professionals, family members or friends. The video deals with difficult listening situations and ways to modify them for better communication."

It only takes 15 minutes to learn some easy tips that could help you in your everyday life communicating with individuals with hearing losses.

On June 30th we bid a fond farewell to Ginny Brink who was our bookkeeper for over five years. Those of you who knew Ginny were familiar with her kindness, as she was always willing to help.

Ginny is looking forward to retirement with her husband Jerry, as they have several trips planned in the near future. Although we will miss Ginny, we wish her a very happy retirement.

ElderCare 2003

Make a difference for Yourself

Live music, dancing, health, beauty, travel and fitness exhibits are just a few of the things you'll find at the ElderCare 2003. This free senior event, to be held at the



Holiday Inn, Worcester, October 27 from 10 a.m - 3 p.m. is sponsored by UMass Memorial. The event is supported by Pfizer Pharmaceuticals, Fallon Community Health Plan, Family Services of Central MA, Central Massachusetts Agency on Aging, Elder Services of Worcester, Age Center of Worcester, MA Association of Councils on Aging and Senior Games.

This expo is not to be missed! The ElderCare 2003 will focus on the lifestyles and health of senior citizens. Wonderful entertainment throughout the day will be provided by the Ballroom Dancers of Central MA and the Tony Barrie Orchestra. Be sure to bring in your medication information for the brown bag pharmacy medication review. Come and enjoy the interactive exhibits and the numerous health screenings--

cardio risk, glucose, cholesterol, blood pressure, depression/dementia and vision.

Over 50 exhibitors will be on hand to provide you with information on their products and services. Three informative seminars are also planned on such topics as nutrition, driving safety and health. Free product samples, great giveaways, and fabulous raffle prizes await you at ElderCare2003. Be sure to visit the SHINE exhibit for a confidential consultation.

So bring a friend and plan to spend the day at the ElderCare 2003-Holiday Inn, Worcester, Monday, October 27.

For more information call American Health Resources 508/238-0376



Planning An Event?

Did you know that we have a Community Events page on our www.SeniorConnection.org website? It contains a plethora of information regarding upcoming events held throughout our Planning and Service Area.

Go to our website and check out the schedule of events. There maybe something of interest to you.

Want your event listed free of charge? Call Cathy Pickering at (508) 852-5539 for more information.

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CMAA Staff Shine at 2003 Latin American Festival

Summer - Fall 2003

by Jeffrey Black

On August 16th and 17th, Centro Las Americas hosted the 13th annual Latin American Festival on the commons in downtown Worcester. This year, Central Massachusetts Agency on Aging (CMAA) had a vendor table at the event and shared with the community information on our programs and resources. CMAA staff Robert Dwyer, Jane Whearley, Eileen O'Brien, Jeffrey Black, and Cathy Pickering, worked the two day event and successfully passed out over 670 Caregiver's Guides and an equal number of agency & program brochures.

The festival is a free annual event that attracts local musicians, artists and food vendors who come to share Latin and Caribbean culture with the greater Worcester community. The event is "not only for the Latinos to learn about our Latin cultures, but for Americans to learn as well", according to Dolly Vasquez, Director of Institute of Latino

Arts and Culture and festival organizer. Centro staff and City officials estimated about 15,000 people attended the event each day.

Aside from the incredible food (Jeff Black's favorite were the Arepas...two sweet corn tortillas with mozzarella cheese in the middle fried on a griddle), music and spirit of community the event brought to downtown Worcester, representatives of several local organizations used the festival as an opportunity to get the word out about the services they provide. CMAA helped spread information on services for seniors and caregivers among other human and health services vendors from throughout Central Massachusetts. The weekend was a lot of fun and a great success for CMAA outreach and recognition in the community.