

ACCESS

Having a healthier hospital stay
Pages 4 & 5



Your Link To Community Resources

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Serving the counties of Livingston, Macomb, Monroe, Oakland, St. Clair and Washtenaw

The return of Superman

Frank Singer of Southfield has a lot in common with Clark Kent, also known as Superman. Singer is mild-mannered, wears glasses, and works as a reporter for senior citizens. At 87, he's got the longevity thing down as well as intelligence and stamina, used for the benefit of humanity. And when life demands supersonic strength, Singer delivers. Of course, he's humble like Clark Kent and would credit the wonderful support of family and guidance of good doctors as the source of his tenacity.



Frank Singer

The ultimate test came at age 65, when Singer was hit by a boulder-size obstacle. Like Superman, Singer was able to crush the forces set out to destroy him and transform the event into a series of opportunities.

He suffered a succession of trans-ischemic attacks (TIAs) that temporarily paralyzed his left side following each episode. "I thought my days were numbered," he said. But Singer refused to let this keep him down. Persistence and faith pushed him beyond the possibilities. In fact, he'll tell you, "My stroke was one of the best things that ever happened to me." This is where the transformation part comes in, minus the phone booth.

While recuperating, Singer discovered free TV production courses offered through the city of Southfield. As a business executive for most of his life, Singer said, "I decided to plunge into the creative side and found that I really enjoy it." He was offered a part-time position with the city's community access Channel 15.

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Harness your passion and make a difference

Some people go through life and never take an interest in politics. Others go no further than exercising their right to vote. But Jim Seegert of Monroe County, wanted to make a difference, so he got involved. The year was 1969 and Seegert banded together with other citizens to stop a landfill from becoming a permanent fixture in their community. His zeal launched him into an unexpected career in politics.

At the time, a trustee on the Northfield Township Board had passed away and the position needed to be filled for the remainder of the term. "A couple board members asked if I'd be interested." To do this, however, Seegert would tackle the responsibilities of trustee in his spare time while continuing to work for the Chrysler Corporation as a millwright. Having dual careers would mean a lot of time away from home. "After talking it over with my wife Shirley, I decided to give it a try," he said.

Over a period of 27 years, Seegert learned the ins and outs of politics, holding a number of elected and appointed positions. Along the way, he grew passionate about issues concerning older adults and in 1990, was appointed to Monroe County's Commission on Aging.

This appointment gave Seegert the opportunity to help seniors by making sure money was allocated toward this segment of the population and also by connecting seniors in need with members of the community who could offer assistance. "I really enjoyed working on the commission and felt fortunate to be able to serve," he said. Soon, Seegert was also appointed to Area Agency on Aging 1-B Advisory Council; a panel of older adults who meet monthly to address issues/concerns of senior citizens and consult with local and state officials to bring about change.

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Gary Muentener, from Senator Jud Gilbert's office, meets with a group of seniors at the 2008 Older Michigianian's Day Rally in Lansing.

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During the 20 years that followed, Singer would produce programming for older adults, resulting in numerous national and regional awards on a range of topics from "Diabetes, a Growing Problem," to "Seniorcize," an exercise show.

emphasized, "I get a great deal of satisfaction from helping people." Hmm, those words could easily be those of Superman.

The success of this metamorphosis, he outwardly admits, would never have been possible without his Lois Lane ...Helen, Singer's wife of

"My stroke was one of the best things that ever happened to me."

And while Singer hasn't yet mastered leaping tall buildings in a single bound, at age 79, he decided to write an informational reference guidebook titled, "Help! I Woke Up A Senior Citizen And Don't Know What to Do!" It was a huge success and led to numerous signing sessions, speaking engagements, and guest appearances on local radio and TV stations.

Now at age 87, in addition to everything else, Singer writes a bi-monthly newsletter, "Spotlight on Seniors," which is distributed throughout the community. He

60 years. "Helen's had the greatest impact on my life," he stressed and mentioned that she's gregarious and outgoing. "I admire her grit and stamina," he said.

Together, this dynamic duo has two sons, Robert and Steven, as well as six grandchildren. "I believe in the institution of marriage," Singer said. "It made me stop thinking 'I' and start thinking 'We', which is not always easy to do." He glanced up from behind his glasses and added, "I have to admit that women are stronger than men." The truth revealed at last! No doubt about it, Frank Singer really is Superman!

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Harness your passion continued from page 1

As a member of the council, Seegert has taken intense interest in the MI Choice program, a program that allows eligible Medicaid recipients to receive care in their own home instead of a nursing home. "Unfortunately, there is a long waiting list for those who would like to take advantage of the program and I would love to see legislation move forward so that more people can benefit," said Seegert.

How you can get involved

To make a difference on issues like this or others that concern you, Seegert recommends doing a little digging to find out why things are in their current state. "Start locally with the AAA 1-B and your county commissioner's office to locate sources. From those sources, you'll discover what your options are," he said.

For matters associated with senior citizens, consider joining AAA 1-B's Senior Advocacy Network (SAN). The group advocates on behalf of older adults. As a member, you will:

- Learn more about issues affecting seniors
- Receive monthly updates on key issues by mail or email
- Have the opportunity to speak with elected officials and other top decision makers
- Respond to calls for action from area senior citizens

There's no cost to participate and the program can help you make connections that lead to change.

Another way to get involved is to attend the Second Annual Older

Michiganians Day Rally on June 24 from 10:00 a.m. until 12:30 p.m. at the Michigan State Capital Building. The event is free to the public and will promote a statewide platform of issues centered on older adult concerns. Leading up to this event, AAA 1-B is sponsoring Older Michiganians Day Rallies in each of the six counties the agency serves. "It's a forum for older adults to share their concerns and rally with their legislators to keep senior issues in the forefront of people's minds," said AAA 1-B Advocacy Specialist Amy Smyth. She added that the rallies offer an opportunity for seniors to sit down with their legislators either one-on-one or in a small group format to talk about particular issues.

Seegert noted, "If you want to see change happen, you have to get involved. Go back to the people who were elected into office and find out where they stand on the issues that concern you." For more information on events relating to Older Michiganians Day or to take part in SAN, contact Amy Smyth at 248-213-0545.

Get in touch with your legislators

You can obtain contact information for your senator by calling the Secretary of the Senate at 517-373-2400.

To get contact information for your state representative call the clerk's office at the House of Representatives at 517-373-0135.

You can also find contact information for both state and federal legislators by visiting www.usa.gov/Contact/Elected.shtml

Older Michiganians Day Rallies

Oakland County

Monday, May 18 2009
9:30 to 11:30 a.m.
Oakland County Executive
Office Building
2100 Pontiac Lake Rd.
Waterford 48329

Macomb County

Friday, May 29, 2009
10 a.m. to noon
Ukranian Cultural Center
26601 Ryan Road
Warren 48091

St. Clair County

Friday, June 5, 2009
10 a.m. to noon
Council on Aging
serving St. Clair County
600 Grand River Avenue
Port Huron 48060

Monroe County

Friday, June 12, 2009
1 p.m. to 3 p.m.
Monroe Center
15275 South Dixie Highway
Monroe 48161

Washtenaw County

Monday, June 1, 2009
10 a.m. to noon
St. Joe Senior Health Building
Lower Level
5361 McCauley Drive
Ypsilanti 48197

Statewide Rally

Wednesday, June 24
10 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
Michigan State Capital Building

For more information contact Amy Smyth at 248-213-0545. The dates for the Livingston rally has already passed. Residents who are interested in participating in the Statewide Rally can contact Amy Smyth.

In Memory



For the last 14 years, Ardemis Kalousdian was a fixture at the Area Agency on Aging 1-B. As a member of the AAA 1-B Advisory Council, she was an energetic and tireless advocate of older adults, who brought years of experience and business acumen to all of the many projects with which she was involved. She worked diligently as the Chair of the AAA 1-B's Advisory Council for over four years and actively participated in several key studies conducted by the agency to identify new programs to meet the needs of older adults and persons with disabilities. She was also a long time member of the Michigan Senior Advocate Council. In fact the day before she passed away, at age 91, she was conducting business for the Advisory Council via conference call. Her involvement with the AAA 1-B exemplified her commitment to volunteerism, something she loved. Ardemis' passion, energy and generous spirit will be greatly missed by all at the Area Agency on Aging 1-B.

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ASK the expert



By Heather Glenday, Senior Manager at Bordine Nursery

Gardening for Seniors

Spring is here! The birds are chirping and the flowers are starting to bloom. Now is the time to plant and enjoy your garden. For some seniors this can be a challenge due to limited mobility and lack of space. But don't let that stop you! Check out the questions and tips below on how to make gardening easier and more enjoyable.

Are there any physical advantages of gardening for seniors?

Gardening is an excellent form of exercise for mobility, flexibility and use of motor skills. It also keeps one active while improving strength and endurance. Gardening not only helps keep seniors active, but it can also reduce stress levels and promote relaxation.

What kind of plants can I grow to make gardening easier for me?

Perennials, trees and shrubs are some of the easiest plants to grow because you only need to plant them once and then you are able to enjoy them year after year. This is more budget friendly in the long run, takes less maintenance and they also need less watering than annuals because they have a larger established root system.

I live in a senior apartment and have limited space to garden. What kinds of plants will do well?

Container gardening is really the best way to garden when you are dealing with limited space. If you love ponds, you can easily create your own container water garden with a pot, a few water plants and water. Or if colorful combinations are more your style, then look for plants that are labeled for easy coordination and container design. At

Bordine Nursery our annuals are all labeled with the numbers 1, 2 or 3 to make choosing the plants for your container simple. The number 1 plants give you height and go in the center of your container. Number 2 plants are "filler" plants and number 3 plants are those that spill over the edge of your pot. We have also bundled some plants in coordinating packs of six to take the guesswork out of plant combinations and container design. Don't let space be a limiting factor when growing vegetables and herbs either! Varieties such as Derby Bush Beans, Peppi Cucumber, Tumbling Tom or Better Bush Tomato, as well as any type of herb, lettuce or pepper are ideal for containers.

Bending and stooping has become much harder for me, do you have any gardening tips for those with limited mobility?

For those with limited mobility, the key is to bring your garden up to a level where you are comfortable or to have it in a place that is easily accessible. Rather than having containers at the furthest part of your yard where they may be hard to water or tend to, keep them near your door or faucet so they can be enjoyed and maintained easily. Containers are a great option as they can be placed on top of bricks, tables, stands or deck railings, making them easier to reach. Raised beds on the other hand, give you the option of a full garden at a more comfortable height. Once built, they are easy to plant and maintain.

Are there any tools or implements to make gardening easier?

There are tons of tools available that make gardening easier such as the Radius brand of ergonomic garden tools. They give you maximum power and comfort while minimizing stress to your hand and wrist. Many pruners now have a sliding latch that takes little effort to open or close and some watering nozzles require just the push of a button to turn them on and off. When kneeling, make sure to use kneeling pads or a kneeling bench. There are some kneeling benches that have handles to help you stand up and even flip over to become a bench to sit on. From multi-purpose garden carts, to hose extenders and watering wands specifically for hanging baskets, there are tools to make almost every aspect of gardening even easier.

For more gardening tips, visit the Bordine Nursery website at www.bordines.com

Six steps you can take to have a healthier hos

Last summer, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services published a National Health Statistics Report that examined hospital emergency room visits across the country in 2005-2006. The report stated that approximately 2.3 million average annual visits were from patients that were re-entering the hospital after being discharged within the last seven days. About one in ten of these cases stemmed from medical or surgical complications.

So, what can do to protect your self from falling into that category? In a nutshell, take notes, bring a buddy, and don't ever be afraid to speak up. It's also a great idea to create a plan for your stay well in advance of when you might need it. Here are some tips to help you get started:

One

Find a hospital that suits your needs

The hospital is where key decisions regarding your health are made, so it's important to invest time in finding one you're comfortable with.

Start your search with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services website www.hospitalcompare.hhs.gov. This site gives you an opportunity to compare hospitals in terms of the care you can expect to receive. It's an eye-opening view of the hospital experience in the general sense and can give you data on the outcomes for specific medical surgeries and conditions. You'll see how other patients fared under the hospital's care and you'll get a heads up to what you can expect before the unexpected happens.

Beyond comparing hospitals, there are certain things you should look for during your search. According to author John Connolly of "How to Find the Best Doctors, Hospitals, HMO's for You and Your Family," you want a hospital that:

- **Is accredited by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO).** Call the Joint Commission at 630-792-5800 or visit www.jointcommission.org to get this information. You can also review services offered and check to see if they comply with the standards set forth by the Joint Commission.
- **Has at least 70 percent board certified physicians.** To find out if this is true of your hospital selection, contact the American Medical Association (AMA) at 800-621-8335 or visit www.ama-assn.org
- **Has at least 60 percent registered nurses on staff.** Check with the AMA for these figures



Two

Investigate costs before and after your time in the hospital to avoid shock from the cost of admission

Contact the hospital billing department before your stay and try to break down the anticipated expenses. Approximately what is the charge for the room? What other costs fall under the room fee? If some of those charges are for common items (like an over-the-counter drug), see if you can bring these from home to avoid charges. And remember that you have the power to negotiate fees. Find out what neighboring hospitals charge and use that information to your advantage.

Another way to keep costs low is by staying within your network of providers for additional services you might receive (anesthesiologist, pathologist, and surgeon). Check with your insurance provider. Mention the fact that you will be going to the hospital. Some plans will not cover your stay unless you clear this with them in advance. And while you have them on the phone, inquire about your deductible and any plan exclusions.

After your hospital stay, when you receive your bill, be on the lookout for:

- 'Miscellaneous' fees
- Calculation errors
- Duplicate billings
- Charges for tests that came back inaccurately processed
- Fees relating to routine care that was not performed in your case
- Routine procedures that could be charged as one fee instead of billed individually at a higher cost
- Questionable procedure codes

Speak with the hospital administrator if you run into problems with the billing department. If you are uninsured or low income, talk directly to the Chief Financial Officer of the hospital to negotiate a reduced fee.

Three

Get prepared for your hospital stay

Well in advance of your trip to the hospital, ask your doctor if you should stop taking certain medications or add in specific vitamins for healing purposes. Clarify what the doctor's directive is about exercise, alcohol, and tobacco use prior to your stay.

If you're having surgery, spend a little time getting to know your anesthesiologist beforehand. Does the operating room have a bispectral index system? This equipment monitors vital signs and aids the anesthesiologist in preventing anesthesia awareness, a state of consciousness where a patient can hear and sometimes feel things when under anesthesia. The technology helps the anesthesiologist accurately monitor your state while watching closely for possible symptoms.

Be up front with your anesthesiologist about the following conditions to avoid complications:

- High blood pressure
- Low blood pressure
- Diabetes
- Reflux
- Hiatal hernia
- Sleep apnea
- Heart disease
- Heavy drinking
- Past anesthesia reactions (you or a family member)

As your scheduled date draws near, here are a few items you may want to pack in your suitcase:

- A sleep mask and ear plugs so you can try to get some rest. Rest is essential to the healing process.
- A spiral notebook to log in hospital activity such as treatments, medications, and supplies. This can be of value to your overall care and then afterwards, when you review your bill.
- A copy of all your important forms: durable power of attorney, medical power of attorney, mental health power of attorney and HIPAA medical records release forms.
- Your medical information (conditions, allergies, medications, health insurance, emergency contacts).
- A portable music player (cassette, CD, or MP3) with soothing instrumental musical selections. Studies show non-lyrical music has healing benefits.
- A portable DVD player with movie discs in lieu of paying hospital TV charges.
- Reading materials, a 'grateful' journal, hand-held games, cards, and puzzles can help pass the time.
- A cell phone to avoid paying hospital telephone fees. Don't forget the charger and a listing of phone numbers.
- Something comfortable from home, like your favorite robe or pillow.

Just like in the days of school, write your name on everything you pack and leave precious valuables at home. Keep a watchful eye on everything you bring with you to the hospital.

Hospital experience

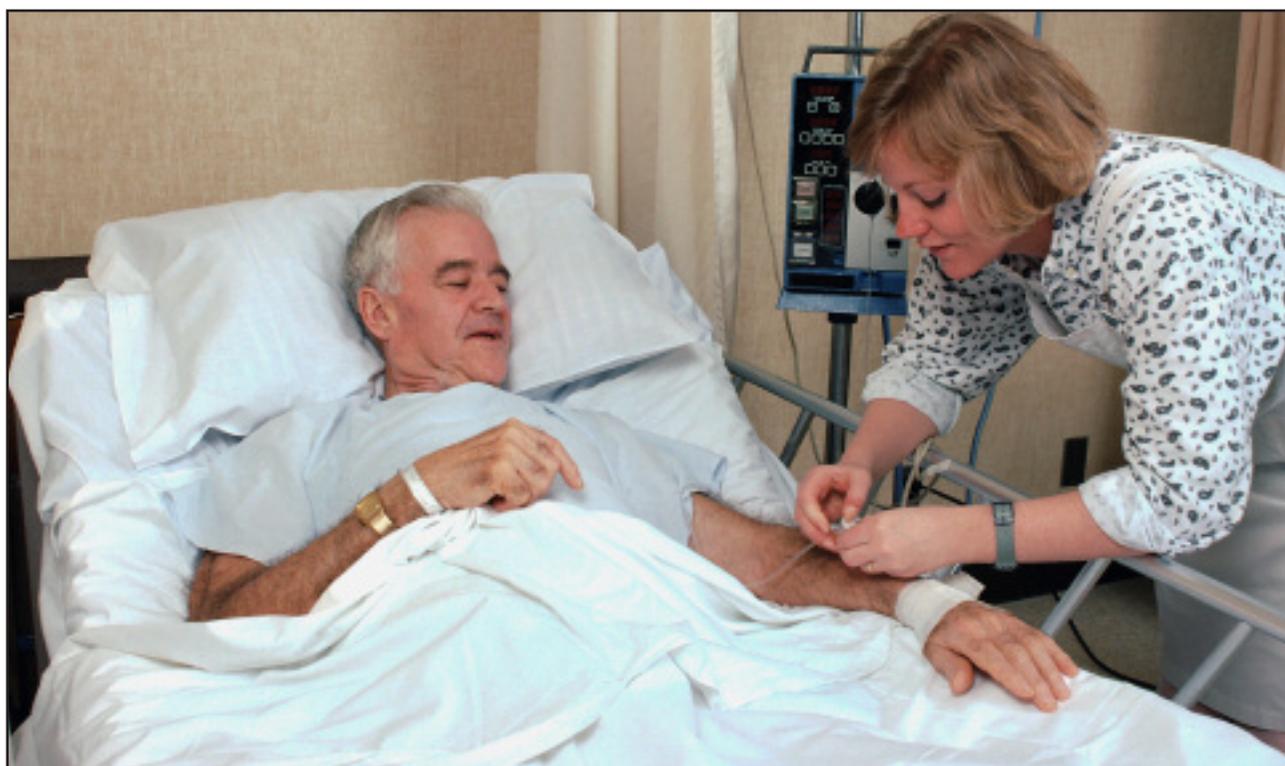
Four

Buddy up with someone who can help you throughout your hospitalization

While you're in the hospital, it's important to have someone there with you who can advocate on your behalf when you're not able to do this for yourself. Many hospitals have cut their nursing staff. Ideally, the ratio is four patients or less to one nurse; and two patients or less to one nurse in intensive care. If the ratio's are higher, you'll need a devoted partner throughout your stay. Choose a person who is able to speak up when issues require action. For some, this person is a beloved family member or friend. But what if you don't have a person who can be there? Some companies do offer paid companions who are able to be with you during your stay.

Bedside Notes is a company staffed with highly qualified, compassionate professionals available to ensure that you receive adequate care. In addition to providing companionship, they will talk with doctors, note conditions, record medications, and report back to loved ones throughout your stay. For more information, visit www.bedsidenotes.com or call 248-766-4595

In a nutshell, take notes, bring a buddy, and don't ever be afraid to speak up.



Five

Protect yourself from complications

When you arrive at your room, look for a sign posted on the wall over your bed that lists your name, room number, and bed number. If you don't see a sign, prevent any possibility of confusion by creating and posting this information yourself.

Insist that hand washing occur before anyone touches you. Viral and bacterial infections are one of the most prevalent complications in the hospital. Ask staff to help you by wiping equipment down with rubbing alcohol before it touches you. Studies have shown that hands and stethoscopes are most at fault when it comes to spreading germs. And speaking of germs, another preventative measure is to trim your nails before you enter the hospital to eliminate the risk of infection from scratching.

According to a University of Michigan study, 40 percent of all hospital infections stem from urinary catheters. If you need a catheter, ask if an antimicrobial catheter is available. The materials in these catheters have been infused with antibiotics and can help prevent infection. If an antibacterial catheter is not available, track your usage in your notebook and each day, ask the doctor if you're well enough to have the catheter removed.

If you're having surgery, it's important to get your albumin levels checked beforehand. Low levels can lead to infection or postoperative bleeding, which can be prevented with a low-cost blood test.

Another step you can take to avoid needless complications is monitoring your medications. Always ask what you are being given and log this into your notebook. If it's a new medication, check again with the nurse or the doctor to be certain that this is part of your treatment plan. It's also important to understand your dosage schedule so that you can keep staff on track.

Six

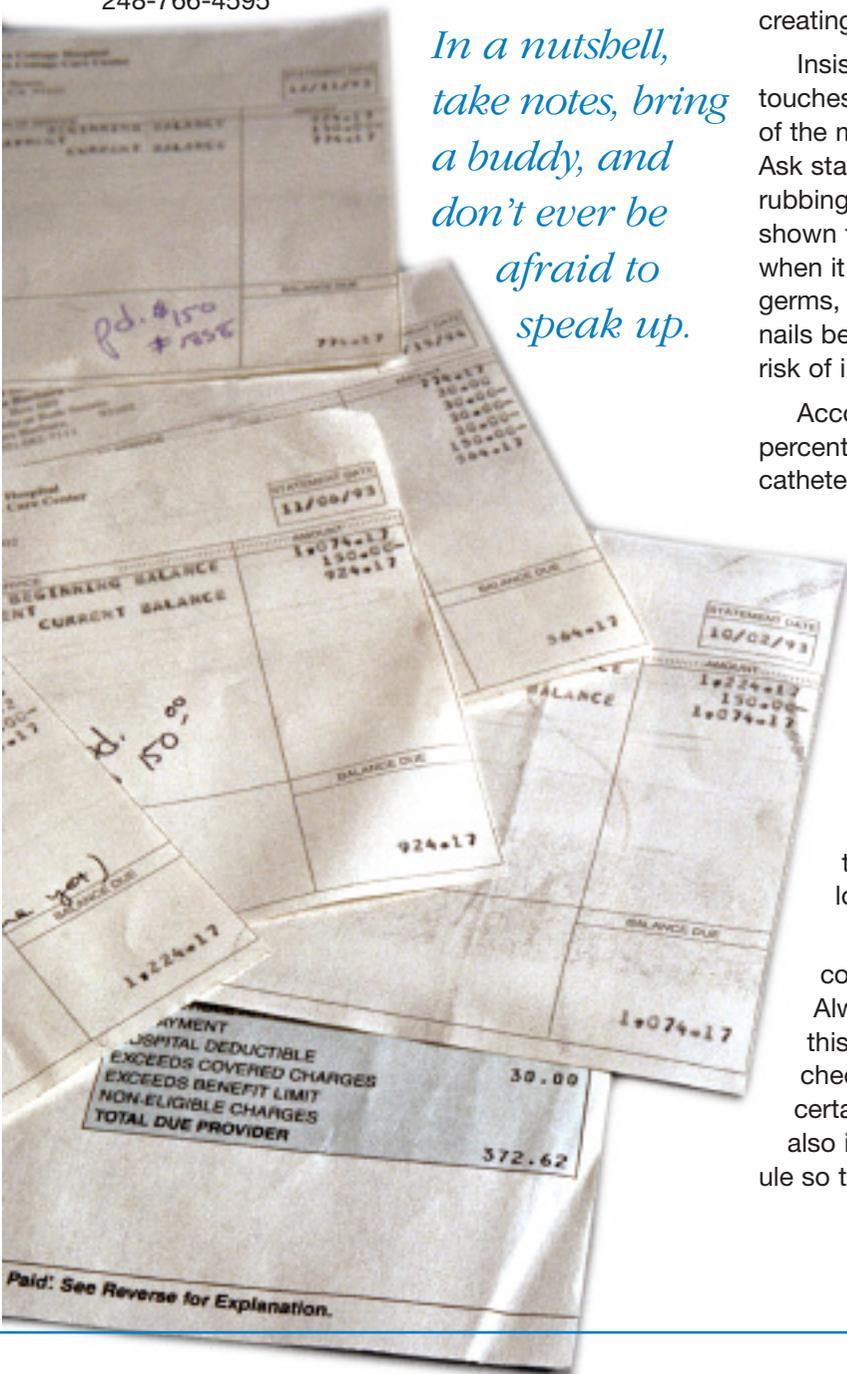
Pave the way for a smoother discharge

Any transition can be challenging, but especially the move from hospital to home. Before you leave the hospital, it's essential that you:

- Have a solid home care plan. Who will be there to help you at home as you continue to heal? How will you manage daily household tasks?
- Understand all aspects of your treatment plan, including the medication you will be taking.
- Ask the nurse what medications you already had during the day.
- Ask the doctor to indicate any emergency symptoms you should be aware of and what you should do if you experience any of them.
- Feel comfortable about going home, from a medical standpoint. If you feel you are being pushed out before you're ready to go, let your physician know your concerns. Any of the following conditions should prevent you from going home: a fever; inability to eat; inability to urinate; unresolved pain; dizziness or confusion that could lead to a fall; and no plan in place for homecare.

Device lets you avoid complications by carrying your medical information with you

You may want to look into purchasing the Care Memory Band, a small, waterproof, portable computer drive that looks like a slim wristwatch and contains your medical history. You input your medical conditions, allergies, vaccinations, medications, insurance references, and emergency contact. This information can then be easily accessed by any doctor, hospital or emergency personnel by plugging the CARE Band into a computer USB port. It's a convenient and secure way to transport potentially life-saving data wherever you go and it's easy to update. The cost is \$24.99. It's available locally at Sav-Mor Drug Stores. For more information, visit www.CareMemoryBand.com or call 866-798-4531.



A beacon of hope

Last November, Critical Signal Technologies (CST) helped deliver hope to Oak Park resident Bonnita Carlisle, following a tragic auto accident two years prior that left her 30-year old son, Travion, a quadriplegic. Now, Bonnita and Travion have support they can count on for peace-of-mind and a sense of freedom.

Hope came in the form of a technological advancement called the BOB 3600, a Personal Emergency Response System (PERS) that activates with the touch of a button if help is needed.



"It's a two-way communication device that puts you in touch with our highly trained staff that will assess the situation and respond accordingly; 24 hours

a day, seven days a week," explained CST Michigan Account Executive Joshua Locke.

"In Travion's case, we adapted the Bob system to meet his health and family needs so he could summon help whenever necessary," Locke said. Because Travion has limited arm movement and cannot easily push a button, "Sip and puff" technology is utilized to activate his BOB system. "It's a mounted, adjustable straw apparatus. If Travion needs help, he can sip or puff on the straw in order to summon CST for help or to prompt the speaker phone option for incoming calls. Up until now, Travion was unable to answer calls on his own."

Travion and Bonnita are grateful for the system. "Travion feels secure knowing he can call for help if he needs it. All he has to do is blow into it and within 40 seconds, our personal consultant is on the other end," said Bonnita. "And it makes me comfortable to go downstairs to do laundry and know that Travion can get help. Even if the power goes out, the machine will still work. It's an excellent device."

Last October, CST also helped extend hope to hundreds of Metro

Detroiters who rely on Meals on Wheels in Royal Oak and Madison Heights. When the method of food delivery for these recipients temporarily changed for a three-month stretch, AAA 1-B asked CST if it could help. "AAA 1-B asked if we could telephone recipients from our care center to inform them of the temporary change to the way meals would be delivered," said Locke. Not only did CST employees make those calls within a couple days, but the company went above and beyond what was asked. "We wanted to do something to help these folks because we knew they wouldn't get that daily face-to-face contact that they had from the Meals on Wheels volunteer," Locke said. In many cases, the volunteer is the only person checking in to make sure they're okay.

"We offered to give each of them a Bob 3600 during those three months for free so they would have the ability to talk with someone anytime, or summon help if needed." In this case, those who were interested were given a pendant they could wear around their neck or wrist. With the push of a button, they could establish contact with CST's Care Center in Farmington Hills.

At the end of the free three-month period, CST extended the use of the system at a reduced rate of \$15/month for Meals on Wheels recipients. The BOB 3600 usually costs \$24.95/month.

Last year, AAA1-B honored the efforts of CST by presenting them with the 2008 Provider of the Year Award. And the recognition doesn't end there. In October, CST was one of 17 companies selected by Michigan Strategic Economic Investment and Commercialization board to receive the 21st Century Jobs Fund award. According to Chairman of the SEIC board Michael J. Jandernoa, "Our goal was to fund the most promising commercialization opportunities to help grow Michigan's high-tech economy." He went on to explain that companies who received the award were the best-of-the-best proposals received.

"We can tailor a system to address a variety of health issues and family situations." To take advantage of different programs, like the Meals on Wheels discount, offered exclusively through AAA1-B, call 800-852-7795. To learn more about the BOB 3600, call CST at 888-557-4462.

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AAA 1-B celebrates 35 years; honors outstanding individuals

35th
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The Area Agency on Aging 1-B's Annual Community Meeting, held on May 15 at the Glen Oaks Country Club, celebrated the agency's 35 years of assisting older adults and adults with disabilities, and honored outstanding individuals in the region whose work has improved the lives of older adults.



Peter Lichtenberg

Peter Lichtenberg: Advances Made for Older Adults. Dr. Peter Lichtenberg, Director of Wayne State's Institute of Gerontology, delivered the meeting's keynote address, which focused on the advances in caring for older adults that have been made in the 35 years since the AAA 1-B was first established. Advances in medical care were highlighted along with positive changes in the way that our society perceives and treats older adults.

The **Sandra K. Reminga Lifetime Achievement Award** was presented to **Kathleen Kirschenheiter**. Kirschenheiter, who retired from the AAA 1-B in 2007, served the Agency for 26 years. Kirschenheiter was Associate Director at the time of her retirement, but served in many capacities, including Director of Community Care Services. One of Kirschenheiter's key contributions to the agency was her work with the MI Choice program. This program, which allows qualified individuals to receive nursing-home level services in their homes, is a key component in helping Michigan's older adults remain living at home. In 1998, Kirschenheiter was instrumental in expanding this program to all six counties that the AAA 1-B serves. She also helped lay the foundation for the Nursing Facility Transition program, which was launched in 2005.



Kathleen Kirschenheiter

The **Volunteer/Community Leadership Award** was presented to **Robert Hull**. Hull has served on the AAA 1-B's Advisory Council for seven years and now serves as its First Vice Chair. He has been involved in many of the Council's ad hoc studies. He is also a strong political advocate for older adults and has been very active with the Michigan Senior Advocates Council, where he meets with state legislators on a monthly basis to discuss and influence legislation impacting older adults. He is also a congressional liaison for AARP.



Robert Hull

Paul Reinhardt, Director, Medical Services Administration, Michigan Department of

Community Health, was the recipient of the **Public Service Leadership Award**. Reinhardt has been one of Michigan's prominent champions of the needs of older adults, and adults with disabilities, who need long-term care. He has been especially responsive to the needs of Michigan's most vulnerable populations, including those who are extremely frail and those who live below the poverty level. He has been a tireless advocate for the MI Choice program and has been instrumental in rebalancing long-term care in Michigan.

Honor the seniors in your life by making a donation

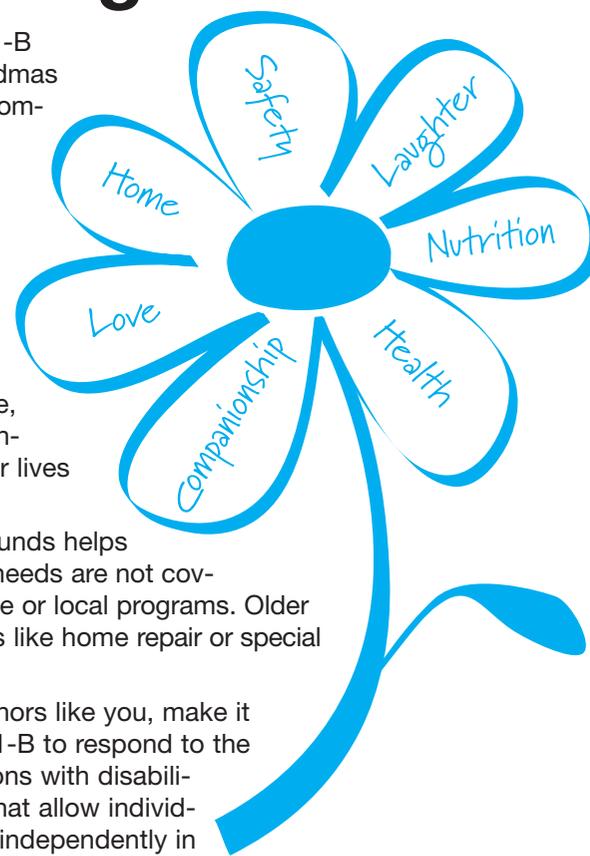
The Area Agency on Aging 1-B salutes Mothers, Fathers, Grandmas and Grandpas for their lifelong commitment to caring for and nurturing their loved ones.

In honor of Mother's and Father's Day, please join us in helping to ensure that aging older adults, who may be vulnerable and in need of extra care themselves, receive the basic necessities... a safe home, nutrition, health, and companionship... to allow them to live their lives with dignity and respect.

The AAA 1-B unmet needs funds help provide help to seniors whose needs are not covered by any of the available state or local programs. Older adults who are in need of things like home repair or special equipment turn to us for help.

The support of generous donors like you, make it possible everyday for the AAA 1-B to respond to the needs of older adults and persons with disabilities and provide vital services that allow individuals to remain living safely and independently in their own homes. As Mother's Day and Father's Day approach, please join us in our commitment to ensure that no older adult we serve goes without the basic necessities, such as health, nutrition, a safe home, love, joy and companionship. By making a contribution to the Area Agency on Aging 1-B, you will make a tremendous difference, and you can do so in honor or in memory of your own mother, father, or special person in your life on Mother's Day or Father's Day.

To make a donation, please call 800-852-7795 or visit us online at www.aaa1b.com.



Michigan Senior Olympics 30th Annual 2009 Summer Games July 5-12

Men and women ages 50 and older can participate in a variety of events. Archery, badminton, billiards, bocce ball, bowling, cycling, dance, horseshoes, pickleball, swimming, track and field, and weightlifting are just some of the sports offered. Events are held throughout the metro Detroit area. For more information, please call 800-400-8161 or e-mail info@michiganseniorolympics.org.

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AAAM09

Respite funding critical to health and well-being of caregivers

Sixteen years ago, Macomb county resident Jeannie Richard was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease. Now at age 80, Richard lives with her daughter Francine Alsobrook's family, husband Kevin and daughter Nicole. "We wanted mom with us because she always enjoyed being around family and friends," Alsobrook said and added that this strategy seemed to have helped her mom hold onto the memories of loved ones for a longer period of time than what was originally expected from the effects of the disease.

According to the Alzheimer's Association, nearly 10 million unpaid caregivers of people with Alzheimer's disease watched over their loved ones for a total of 8.5 billion hours in 2008; care valued at \$94 billion dollars. Staggering evidence suggests that providing this care puts tremendous stress on caregivers, placing them at high risk for depression, stress-related illnesses, unemployment, increased debt, and even mortality.

"I was going through a period of depression, feeling torn over wanting to be there for my mom but then not having the time to spend with my husband and daughter. I was emotionally tired," she said. Her caregiving responsibilities ended up taking a toll on the family. "Mom needed someone there with her at all times and this made it impossible to go to things like Nicole's soccer games or school events as a family," said Alsobrook. Even little things like running to the store to get milk had to be scheduled.

Richard's doctor got AAA1-B involved to help Alsobrook manage the stress. This was how she learned of the out-of-home respite program, designed to give caregivers a break by providing 24-hour care for up to two weeks at a time. Through AAA 1-B, caregivers can reserve a bed for their loved one at one of five licensed Adult Foster Care Homes or Homes for the Aged contracted through AAA1-B, located in five of the six counties AAA1-B serves.

"When I spoke with Out-of-Home Respite Coordinator Nancy Thompson, she was such a breath of fresh air and she worked very hard to organize everything for me," Alsobrook said. "Now, my family and I have something to look forward to. And my mom gets more social interaction with people her own age. She seems to really enjoy going."

Unfortunately, funding cuts last October led to the elimination of a respite bed in Livingston County. Livingston county residents can still

participate in the program at a facility in one of the other counties. According to Thompson, "From the onset of this program in 2001, our utilization rate has been at 90 percent each year, with the beds reserved 99 percent of the time." The program is not only made available to Medicaid waiver and AAA1-B care management clients, but it's also open to the public. And demand is growing.

In order to be eligible for the program, participants must meet the following criteria:

1. The person going to the out-of-home respite program must be over age 18 and to qualify, either the caregiver or the loved one must be 60 years of age or older.
2. You must live in one of the six counties AAA1-B serves.

3. The person attending the program must require assistance with at least two activities of daily living.

"The beds are pretty full well in advance. So if you know that you have something specific in mind, even if it's six to eight months away, go ahead and reserve it. That way you'll have it," said Thompson. Allow 4-6 weeks for the admission process, which requires filling out paperwork and obtaining a chest x-ray (no more than 90 days old) before the date arrives.

Thompson emphasized, "The out-of-home respite program allows families to plan for a break from being the caregiver. And they need that break to be able to continue in their efforts." If you'd like more information on the out-of-home respite program, contact AAA 1-B at 800-852-7795.



Advocacy • Action • Answers on Aging

Mission

The Area Agency on Aging 1-B is a nonprofit organization dedicated to preserving the independence, dignity, and quality of life of older adults, family caregivers, and adults with disabilities residing in Livingston, Macomb, Monroe, Oakland, St. Clair and Washtenaw counties by supporting a comprehensive service delivery system and providing access to community-based care.

Goal

To be the specialists in aging and the point of access to care for individuals 60 and older, family caregivers, and adults with disabilities living in the counties of Livingston, Macomb, Monroe, Oakland, St. Clair and Washtenaw.

Services

Home Care Services

Personal care (bathing, dressing, etc.), homemaking, home-delivered meals, respite care, chore assistance, home injury control.

Community-Based Services

Adult day services, transportation, congregate meal sites, home delivered meals, out-of-home respite, legal assistance, employment for older workers, elder abuse prevention, services for vision and hearing impaired, long-term care ombudsman, resource advocacy, counseling, and volunteer caregivers.

Information and Assistance Service

Resource specialists can quickly answer questions and access information for callers using a computerized database listing 5,000 senior services and 2,000 providers in southeast Michigan.

Call toll-free, **800-852-7795**.

Hours are 8 a.m.- 5 p.m., weekdays. You can also visit www.aaa1b.com

AAA 1-B Access Centers

Livingston/Washtenaw County
734-213-6704
Macomb County 586-226-0309
Monroe County 734-241-2012
Oakland County 248-357-2255
St. Clair County 810-388-0096

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Calendar of Events

Getting a Good Night's Sleep with Arthritis

Wednesday, June 10, 5:30-8:30 p.m.

Gerry Kulick Community Center
1201 Livernois, Ferndale

This free event, sponsored by The Arthritis Foundation, will feature advice and presentations from a Rheumatologist and Sleep Specialist. Register by calling 800-968-3030.

Senior Fun Festival

Wednesday, June 17
10:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

Gibraltar Trade Center Expo Center
237 N. River Rd., Mt. Clemens

Sponsored by the Macomb County Senior Citizen Services, the festival will feature entertainment, free health tests, and over 100 exhibitors. Parking and entrance to the festival is free. For more information, call the Macomb County Senior Citizens Services at 586-469-6313.

Livingston Senior Power Day and Caregiver Fair

Friday, August 7, 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

Brighton High School
7878 Brighton Rd., Brighton

This free event is sponsored by the Livingston County Consortium on Aging and will feature presentations, entertainment and over 50 vendors. A Caregiver Expo, featuring only exhibitors, will be held on Thursday, August 6, 6:00-9:00 p.m. For more information, please contact Sue Ann Daniels sueann2008@hotmail.com.

Older Michiganians' Rally

Wednesday, June 24
10 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Michigan State Capital Building

The event is free to the public and will promote a statewide platform of issues centered on older adult concerns. For more information, contact Amy Smyth, AAA 1-B Advocacy Coordinator, at 248-213-0545.

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NURSING HOME

If a loved one is going into a nursing home, you need to read the FREE Special Report written by a Mount Clemens Elder Law Attorney called, "The 9 Questions You Must Ask If You or a Loved One Is Going Into a Nursing Home."

For a free copy call toll-free 1.866.828.3111, and ask for "Report D2." Call today for the information some nursing homes hope you never learn!