Mary Lois Kegin celebrates
100th Birthday!

story on page 6
Managing challenging Alzheimer's behaviors

by LISA M. PETSCHER

One in ten Americans over age 65 and almost half of those over 85 have Alzheimer’s disease or a related disorder, according to the Alzheimer’s Association.

Alzheimer’s disease is the most common form of dementia (loss of cognitive functioning) and involves breakdown of nerve cells in the brain. Affected persons gradually lose the ability to interpret information and to send messages to their body to behave in certain ways.

Mental changes include memory loss, difficulty carrying out routine tasks, disorientation and decreased judgment. Mood changes include anxiety, and decreased expression or inability to control emotions.

Some common behaviors are wandering away from home and becoming lost, repetitious behavior, sundowning (escalation in behavior in the late afternoon and early evening) and altered sleep patterns. Other challenging behaviors may include hallucinations (distorted sensory experiences), delusions (false beliefs), paranoia (suspiciousness), and agitation.

A wide variety of interpersonal strategies and environmental modifications have been found to be successful in managing, if not reducing, confusion, agitation and frustration.

Medications may be used to treat some of the more severe behavioral symptoms. However, because they are a chemical form of restraint, they are generally as a last resort.

Moreover, many dementia-related behaviors do not respond to medication. If you are a caregiver of someone with dementia, you may find the following behavior management strategies helpful in looking after your relative.

Some general advice

- Learn as much as possible about your relative’s disease and its management, and educate family and friends to help them understand. (Your local chapter of the Alzheimer’s Association is an excellent resource.) Knowing what to expect and how to deal with challenges can go a long way to reduce anxiety and foster a sense of control.

- Try to identify an underlying cause for behaviors of concern. Keep a log that includes triggers, strategies attempted and your relative’s response. With patience and creativity you will develop a repertoire of strategies you can draw from to help prevent or manage behavior.

Interpersonal strategies

- Use a low-pitched voice to convey calmness and reassurance. Be conscious of your facial expressions and other body language as well.

- Use simple words and short sentences. Avoid clichés. Keep questions to a minimum, especially those that begin with “Why” or “How.” Allow plenty of time for a response. Simplify tasks and break them down into manageable steps, communication them one at a time. Demonstration may help. Try different words when your message is not getting across.

- Offer limited choices – for instance, “Would you like coffee or juice?” rather than “What would you like to drink?” Respond to your relative’s mood when his words don’t make sense – for example, “It sounds like you’re feeling sad.” Listen, show empathy and provide reassurance.

- Use humor to deflect a tense situation. Be patient and allow ample time to carry out activities. If your relative becomes argumentative, don’t debate the facts — a no-win situation. Instead, focus on feelings or use distraction.

- Learn to recognize early signs of frustration and be prepared with some calming strategies to head off problematic behavior — for example, putting on soothing music or serving a favorite snack.

- If your relative becomes aggressive, remain calm and give him space. Retreat and seek help if you feel threatened.

Environmental adaptations

- Establish and stick to daily routines.

- Provide meaningful activities to occupy your relative’s time. Investigate available day programs in the community.

- Prominently post a calendar for marking events and appointments and keep easy-to-read clocks around the house.

- Keep frequently used items in a consistent, easily accessible spot. Labels may be helpful.

- Store valuables and items that could pose a danger — including car keys, knives and toxic substances — in a secure place.

- Keep rooms well lit to eliminate shadows. Minimize glare by removing mirrors and covering shiny surfaces.

- Minimize noise from televisions, radios and telephone ring tones.

- Avoid changes to the environment and don’t allow clutter to accumulate. Consistency and simplicity are key.

- Avoid situations involving crowds, noise or unpredictability.

Health Tips

- Ensure your relative eats nutritious meals, gets adequate exercise and rest, and has regular medical and dental checkups.

- When your relative appears agitated, investigate physical causes such as pain, hunger or need for toileting first, since these needs are easily addressed.

- Arrange a doctor visit if you notice sudden changes in your relative’s functioning, mood or behavior, which may indicate an acute (treatable) health problem – a bladder infection or medication side effects, for example.

- If you have ongoing concerns about your relative’s mood or behavior, request a referral to a geriatric mental health service. **********

Lisa M. Petsche is a social worker and a freelance writer specializing in boomer and senior issues. She has personal and professional experience with elder care.
The theater scene was particularly captivating. Absurdist drama would do well, “in the round.” Caitlin Donnelly came back from New Hampshire to direct these Albee Shows in hopes of getting a Kennedy Center invite. You have our vote; you and your actors did a jam-up job. Congratulations!

November entertainment looks full. For you fans of The Beatles, “The Best of The Beatles Live,” with The Return who do a remarkable impersonation of the Fab Four. This event will take place on November 10th beginning at 7:30 pm at the Ritz Theater in Thomaston. Tickets may be purchased at the theater or the Thomson-Upson Arts Council (706-647-5372). Advanced tickets are $15.00 and $20.00 at the door.

If you haven’t been on the island in a while, be aware, you are stopped immediately when entering to buy a parking ticket. We tried to promise not to park, but they charged us anyway! You can’t go straight through to the beach; you have to take a detour way! You can’t go straight through to the beach; you have to take a detour way! You can’t go straight through to the beach; you have to take a detour way! You can’t go straight through to the beach; you have to take a detour way!

Food Stamp benefit distribution date may change

Client’s Food Stamp benefit availability now dependent upon client ID

Submitted by Ravea Graham

Since the Client ID does not change over time, this will help ensure that clients receive food stamp benefits on the same date each month. A Client ID is used by several programs in DHS and can also be used to create an online account via COMPASS at www.compass.ga.gov. On COMPASS, DFCS clients can apply for eligibility, check their benefits, report changes, and renew benefits.

If assistance is needed with obtaining a Client ID, please contact a DFCS Eligibility Specialist at your local DFCS office.

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Cotton Picking and Mullet Fish

by CHRISTINE COLEMAN

I feel sure you’ve noticed those large fields of open white cotton as you drive along the highway. To me, that’s a beautiful sight. I can enjoy it now much more than when I was growing up in the early 1930s. We lived on the farm and cotton-picking time came around every year in late summer. It had to be gathered before “September Gales” came and made the crop less profitable.

As a young child, my mother would let me sit on her cotton sack as she picked cotton and dragged me along after her. Soon I was big enough to have a flour sack (made just for me) that I could use to pick cotton like the others in my family. Now, that was so important! A bag of my own! Little did I know that in the future, I’d feel different about picking cotton. Those long days were hot and our backs would ache from bending over for long hours. Of course, that was a job that had to be done, and you didn’t question why.

During those hot days, some-one in the group went for a bucket of water for those who were working. That person was instructed to hurry and also to draw water from the ‘north’ side. Drawing water from the north side meant to lower the well bucket into the well and hold the well chain so that the bucket would enter the water on the north side. Water from there meant that it would be cooler.

Back then, grown ups were offered water first and then the children drank. Mind you, everyone used the same dipper, and we all lived.

A special tradition of ours was during cotton-picking time. When Papa carried a wagonload of cotton to be ginned, he always brought home mullet fish and a block of ice. We knew we were going to have mullet for supper. My brothers would go out to the wagon and get the block of ice Papa had brought home. It would be embedded in cottonseeds he had brought home from the gin. In this way, the ice would not melt so quickly. That night, we’d have fish and corn bread and tea. That’s all we wanted. Today, people have side dishes, but we didn’t want more.

To add to this pleasure, Mama would do a different menu for breakfast. She’d mix fish eggs and hen eggs to cook. Now, this was another special treat. We’d have our dual dish eggs and hot biscuits. With this memory in mind, we didn’t go back to the cotton field feeling so bad. We knew that when Papa carried a load of cotton to be ginned, he’d bring back a block of ice and a block of mullet fish.

Christine Coleman lives in Swainsboro. Feel free to E-mail her at cjc@reicompeters.com.

Spiritual Notes

A Season of Thanksgiving!

by Dr. Bill Baggett

Minister to Seniors

Dunwoody Baptist Church

As we approach November, our thoughts turn to Thanksgiving and the stories of the pilgrims as they gave thanks to God for His blessings in this new land. Growing up I can recall the anticipation of quality time with family members and the stories of the pilgrims as our thoughts turn to Thanksgiving. At any age it is sometimes difficult to be thankful.

Most importantly, as did the Pilgrims, we need to give thanks to God for the manifold blessings we receive every day. David expressed it so beautifully in a song of Praise and thanksgiving for the Lord’s faithfulness in the following Psalm:

“Make a joyful shout to the Lord, all you lands! Serve the Lord with gladness; come before His presence with singing. Know that the Lord, He is God; It is He who has made us, and not we ourselves; we are His people and the sheep of His pasture. Enter into His gates with thanksgiving and into His courts with praise. Be thankful to Him and bless His name. For the Lord is good; His mercy is everlasting, and His truth endures to all generations.” (Psalm 100)

Elizabeth Bisibeo said it best; “Blessed are those who give without remembering and take without forgetting.” As we receive God’s daily blessings as well as gifts from others, let us not forget to say a heartfelt Thank You!
Poets’ Corner

Editor’s Note: If you have written a “well-worked” poem which you would like considered for publication, please forward it to: Senior News, P. O. Box 8389, Warner Robins, GA 31088-8389. Please include your name and address on your poem. We will publish selected poems (or excerpts) as space permits.

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FREEDOM’S PRICE
(In memory of the casualties of Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941)
by Henry Newton Goldman
Veteran – WWII

Each veteran approaches the rail, drops a flower into the water, gives a salute and steps away.

Oil drops rising from the ship below, burst upon the water, spread outward in a circular rainbow of color, as if those entombed below are accepting these floral honors.

Echoing Taps bugle across the water, slowly as the flowers float away. A naval custom is observed as a soldier, a sailor, a Marine, salutes the memory of Pearl Harbor.

To rouse the leaves in a yard you love And even cut the grass The many things you used to do That now you need to ask Sometimes it lonely, your children gone Only a bird left to greet you And the memories of all you had In your heart you long It’s not easy getting old I heard my mother say Sometimes with tears in her eyes As she would nightly pray The many things you want to do That you can’t do anymore You even have a hard time Getting up to answer the door No one seems to understand How hard it gets to be To have so much help When it used to be just me So much you used to do alone Whatever you wanted to do No one to ask for a ride To places you need to go It’s not easy getting old I heard my mother say And now I suddenly understand For I am 60 today I hold her hand tightly As we both walk slowly away To be together hand in hand For I am 60 today

Author’s Note: I saw the barbed wire when I served at Marine Barracks, Pearl Harbor.

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AGE
by Frankie Lee

It’s not easy getting old I hear my mother say You have no idea how hard it is To get through each and every day The many things you’ve done before Seem so, so far away And, oh how badly you want that time back You ask for each time you pray So many things you can no longer do That you have done before So many places you want to go Little things like going to a store To raze the leaves in a yard you love And even cut the grass The many things you used to do That now you need to ask Sometimes it lonely, your children gone Only a bird left to greet you And the memories of all you had In your heart you long It’s not easy getting old I heard my mother say Sometimes with tears in her eyes As she would nightly pray The many things you want to do That you can’t do anymore You even have a hard time Getting up to answer the door No one seems to understand How hard it gets to be To have so much help When it used to be just me So much you used to do alone Whatever you wanted to do No one to ask for a ride To places you need to go It’s not easy getting old I heard my mother say And now I suddenly understand For I am 60 today I hold her hand tightly As we both walk slowly away To be together hand in hand For I am 60 today

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HARBOR NO HATE
(Dedicated to the Greatest Generation)
by Vera King

The barbed wire on Waikiki Was to deter the enemy He causes me to contradict the thoughts I know are pure; and laughs at me for all the misery he causes me to endure.

He tries to make an evil thing of so many upright deeds.

Everywhere I go he’s there, and he compels me to his heels.

I must free myself from this one who has no love for me, and do as I would have me do and with integrity.

He has always been elative, I could never seem to win; the struggles of mind and soul, my deepest thoughts within.

But now I know him, I have seen his ugly face; I’m sure the scrimmage will continue to see who sets the pace.

For now I am determined, I will not be enslaved by he who stared at me this morning while I shaved!

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Peaches & Screams

by CLAIRE HOUSER DODD

What a lovely party by the Middle Georgia Camellia Society had to entertain the judges from the flower show at the Georgia National Fair in Perry. The party was held at the home of William & Mary Rumph in Marshallville, Friday night minus the Harts who were called away for an emergency. However, their very competent daughter-in-law, Shanna (Burt’s wife) was there entertaining and taking pictures all around the pool and the pool house. The food was delicious; a low-country boil with Shrimp fetched from Darien, GA and cooked to perfection by Grady Stokes, the sausage and corn made the perfect compliment to the slaw made by several ladies. The desserts were unbelievable, especially a cake made with praline liqueur, one called Thunder (the chef thinks it’s short for Thunder Thighs) as it looks like a cake made with praline liqueur, a cake made with Kahlua and Shrimp. The judges were to enter the fair and won a special award presented by the National Fair. One man from Melrose, FL entered 100 blooms and won the Sweepstakes and six other awards. The early camellia bloomers are treated with gibberellic acid which produces a larger bloom and much earlier in the year.

If you missed this show, put the date of the next show on your calendar now. It will be in Byron, GA on the 2nd Saturday, November 12th. And join the Middle Georgia Camellia Society so you can enjoy those gorgeous flowers that bloom in the winter time, as well as our fun parties.

Call the treasurer, Warren Thompson at 478-825-2559, membership is only $10.00 per year, you can’t go wrong. See you there!

Please be sure to contact the Leader Tribune with all the latest happenings in and around Peach County.

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FREEDOM'S PRICE

November 2011 • Senior News • Macon • Page 5
Having had the distinct pleasure of meeting Mary Lois Kegin twenty years ago, we recognized her as a remarkable lady immediately. She was married to an office, and looked every bit the part. She walked the part... she talked the part... and, certainly dressed the part. A lovely lady.

Now twenty years later, all the above are still true. Only one glaring change, we’re not meeting her in the Officers Club at Warner Robins as before, but we, and a passel of others, are stopping by her home where the good lady holds court. We stopped by a couple Friday nights ago with a friend, Rodger East, and there were adults coming and going. How many people have that many friends just up and stop by? Nobody else we know. She is now as twenty years ago, extremely popular.

You may have guessed by now that Mary Lois has turned 100 years young, is in good health, looks beautiful, and still has that zippy personality.

Earlier this year she celebrated her 100th birthday with 100 people (at least) at the Robins Air Force Base Officers Club where she and her husband, Colonel George E Kegin spent many of their leisure hours.

However, not together, he in the early years of his life as Director of Supply – Second Military man on the base who also helped plan the base. He and Colonel Charles Thomas, First Commander of the base, sat on wooden crates and created the plans for Warner Robins Air Force Base. She, in the later part of her life, enjoyed many hours at the officer’s club.

How, you ask, is this dichotomy possible? Well, you see, in and around the 40’s, Mary Lois had fallen in love with a very small boy who played with her sister’s children in Mississippi. She later met the father whose wife was deceased and had to marry this nice man, Richard Stephen Lynn, and his wonderful little boy who so needed a mother.

They had a wonderful life here in Macon, GA with both working on the base, and were friends with Colonel Kegin and his wife. After retirement, Mary Lois nursed her husband for 12 years here in Middle Georgia and they lost touch with the Colonel except by mail to other friends. Much later, after having lost his wife too, Colonel Kegin visits his sister in Macon and meets Mary Lois again. The good friends got together and married, enjoying an extremely happy life in Sheridan, WY, until Colonel Kegin returned to live full time in Macon.

That adorable little boy, her step-son, Richard Dale Lynn that Mary Lois fell in love with is now deceased, but his son Stephen Dale Lynn lives close by with his wife who is Plans and Program Director on the base. He works in the District Attorney Office in Perry. Granddaughter, Patty Lynn Conley, is Assistant Director for Big Brothers & Big Sisters of Middle Georgia Program, and another grand, Susan Dart, is a Flower Designer. Susan’s husband was an all-star football player here in Warner Robins and the University of Florida.

This close-knit family got together and threw the party of the year to celebrate the 100th birthday of Mary Lois Kegin.

Susan was in charge of the cake which was a spectacular layered masterpiece. One layer was be-decked with a red candy slipper to represent her grandmother’s extensive social life. Each layer represented a different phase of her life and was beautifully executed. Susan designed the cake and had it made in Macon. Besides being gorgeous it was also delicious, a grand time was had by all celebrating this very important birthday of a well-loved lady!

Along with her many other friends, we wish a Happy Birthday to Mary Lois Kegin.
Guidelines to help you recognize early stages of Alzheimer’s

by EV A MOR, PhD
Author of Making the Golden Years Golden

My aunt was diagnosed with Alzheimer’s some years ago. It did not come as a shock to us, but we tried to fool ourselves for quite a few years before the diagnosis came. She is a Holocaust survivor, and like my parents, lived through a hellish nightmare during World War II and survived. Her life, as with the rest of the survivors, was not easy, but she built her existence with courage and not a drop of resentment as to the hand that life had dealt her.

She married, but was unable to have children, and worked hard as a menial worker, as she didn’t have the luxury of benefiting from higher education or any vocational training. In those days one struggled to provide food and clothing for herself and her husband, there was no time for training. In her early 70s she lost her husband, who suffered from Parkinson’s for many years. During all the years that she took care of her husband, all our attention was directed toward him. We all were worried about him, and followed the stages of his illness. None of us paid much attention to the telltale signs that were becoming more and more pronounced in her behavior. Being as intelligent as she was, and maybe sensing her behavior. Being as intelligent, the stages of his illness. None of us paid much attention to the telltale signs that were becoming more and more pronounced in her behavior. Being as intelligent as she was, and maybe sensing her behavior.

My aunt was always involved in her community, volunteering, or partaking in social activities in the local center for senior citizens. She always loved art, sewing, and embroidery, and her work was displayed at the center.

When she became cognizant of her failing memory, forgetting the names of the others in the center and forgetting what she should do with her project midway through it, she began to feel very uncomfortable, and refused to continue attending. This was very disconcerting to all of us, because she had become reclusive, anti-social, and depressed.

She also started to lose weight. It was time to step in. With the help of a local agency, we brought her into a home aide for eight hours a day, on the weekends relatives would care. We found a different senior center, with a program that was geared for people with Alzheimer’s. She did not know the center, with a program that was geared for people with Alzheimer’s. She did not know the center, with a program that was geared for people with Alzheimer’s.

Many of the activities were subtle: exercises in memory rejuvenation and establishing tools and tricks to help the participants to remember and function in the best of their ability in spite of the illness that was robbing them of their memories. Specialists in the treatment of people with Alzheimer’s provided much needed help and guidance to make the home geared to promote normalization and a sense of familiarity.

When we visit with my aunt, we introduce ourselves by name, to eliminate the need for her to guess who the person in front of her is. The key is to make her life safe, comfortable, and full of love, which she had always bestowed in great amounts on all of us when she could.

As we know, although dementia is a physical illness, it manifests itself in behavioral patterns. To establish a list of guidelines, to help you recognize the early stages of Alzheimer’s, the following signs may be helpful:

- Short term memory loss
- Difculties retaining new information
- Lost or misplaced objects
- Neglecting household chores
- Poor personal hygiene
- Careless appearance
- Unsafe decisions
- Decrease in language skills
- Decreased interest in previous hobbies
- Decrease in social interaction
- Decrease interest in family and friends
- Changes in old habits

It is hard to watch our parent or a loved one struggling with Alzheimer’s especially as they worsen through each stage. Each stage presents different sets of problems, which affect each individual differently. There is a lot of research being done at this time, and we are likely to eventually see new techniques and more accurate diagnosis, as well as better treatment. Who knows? Maybe the baby boomers will be the beneficiaries of these future breakthroughs.

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Senior News • November 2011 • Macon • Page 7
Georgia eye doctor helps legally blind to see again

High technology for low vision patients allows many to drive again!

Atlanta, Georgia –

E ver looked through a pair of field glasses or binoculars? Things look bigger and closer and much easier to see. Georgia optometrist Dr. Brian Saunders is using miniaturized telescopes to help people who have lost vision from macular degeneration or other eye conditions.

Dr. Saunders is one of only a few doctors who prescribe biopic telescopes to help those who have lost vision due to macular degeneration, diabetic retinopathy, and other debilitating eye diseases.

Here are some stories from Dr. Saunders’ Low Vision patients:

Randall Day of North Georgia writes, “I am writing this letter to thank you for changing my everyday living with the biopic glasses. It has greatly changed my outdoor activities, as well as the things I do in the house – like seeing TV, the computer, and reading books. This letter can in no way explain the changes in my everyday living and no words could ever express my gratitude. I truly thank you.”

“I wish to thank you for the telescopic lenses you fitted for me. The game plan of reading the Wall Street Journal and watching FOX NEWS at the same time is working perfectly. Thank you for a good job.” J. W. Buckley.

Many states now allow the use of telescopic glasses to help meet the vision requirements for driving.

“After being diagnosed with macular degeneration... This vision loss caused me to be unable to drive unless conditions were perfect. Since obtaining my biopic telescopic glasses from you, I am now able to drive with confidence and security. I have gained back much of the independence I had lost thanks to you and your staff.” H. H. Paul of Atlanta.

“Telescopic glasses can cost over $2,000 says Dr. Saunders. Low vision devices are not always expensive. Some reading glasses cost as little as $475 and some magnifiers under $100. Every case is different because people have different levels of vision and different desires.

For more information, contact Dr. Brian Saunders at 1-877-948-7784, 770-948-7784 or visit our website at www.IALVS.com.

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The Next Chapter
Now You See Her

Book Reviews by
Anne B. Jones, PhD

Now You See Her
James Patterson and Michael Ledwidge
Little, Brown and Co., New York, 2011 (Also Available in Large Print)

Now You See Her, by James Patterson and Michael Ledwidge is a ninety-mile-an-hour read! This mystery doesn’t let up until the final pages and even then there’s a twist!

Many of James Patterson’s books have appealed to me, although some have an abundance of “slice and dice,” too much gratuitous violence for my reading appetite. Now You See Her is more into plot, impressive in its relentless pacing, and its writers hold its readers through the power of words. Now You See Her was thrust upon me by the Harbour Shores Book Club, an enthusiastic group of women who live just south of Atlanta. As a member, I was especially attracted to their latest gathering by promises of gourmet quiche, prepared by our hostess Ginger. Comments were as follows:

“Oh, you’ll like this book,” said Ginger, as soon as I arrived. “I read it in just two days. You’ll open the book and keep going.”

“It moves quickly from one thing to another,” said Brenda.

“The author will keep you in suspense,” added Sandy.

“I’m not a reader,” commented Bunny, “but it was so good, it made me read. My husband read it and liked it.”

“I knew immediately there was a bad cop,” said Lynda, the wife of a former APD officer.

“It seemed preposterous, but it was a page turner,” threw in Kathleen.

Peggy noted how the plot evolved, “Doing business can be so lucrative. Temptation is great when there are millions of dollars involved.”

“The main female character was a very poor judge of character,” they all agreed.

“You have got to read this.”

Ginger sealed my fate with “I have the book. You can borrow it.”

As I read Now You See Her, I was reminded of the time I spent a few days as a guest at the home of a Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist. I was working on Gold Thunder and sought his input: “A book must propel the reader to its end,” he said emphatically. Since I was writing about a racecar driver, his words seemed fitting, but that sage advice has stayed with me throughout my writing career.

Could that journalist have also spoken with James Patterson and Michael Ledwidge? This I don’t know. Nonetheless, they have also heeded those words. Now You See Her captures its reader’s attention. Zooming from one traumatic event to another, the book is a fast-paced thriller from start to finish. It puts the reader in the groove on the first page and just doesn’t let go.

The plot centers on one horrific incident that forever changes one woman’s life. Its twists and turns are unexpected and the work is a fresh contemporary take on the genre. Characters could have been explored more fully, but on this super speedway paved with words, who’s to notice? I liked the book. Enough said!

******

You may contact Anne at anneb-jones@nan.com, annebjones.com.

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Medical Open-Enrollment Period Ends December 7th: People with Medicare can compare and choose new plans

A mericans now have seven full weeks, which started October 15, to select new Medicare plans or choose to stay with current coverage. During this year’s Medicare open enrollment period, which ends December 7, the Georgia Department of Human Services (DHS) and Division of Aging Services and the state’s Agency on Aging will offer free one-on-one assistance and community presentations to help Georgians make decisions about Medicare health and prescription drug plans.

The GeorgiaCare State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) offers personalized assistance through a toll-free help line at 866-55-AGING (866-55-4464). Consumers may also compare plans at www.medicare.gov or call 1-800-Medicare (1-800-633-4227).

“Choosing the right Medicare option is one of your unique healthcare needs, preferences, and finances takes time and research,” said Dr. James J. Bolut, director of DHS’ Division of Aging Services.

Unfortunately, the GeorgiaCare program offers help from unbiased trained specialists.

People with Medicare can create personalized coverage solutions from options such as Original Medicare, “Part D” prescription drug-help plans, and comprehensive “Part C” Medicare Advantage plans. Plan details may change, so beneficiaries should carefully review their current coverage annually.

GeorgiaCare SHP counselors also assist with filling out applications for “Extra Help,” which covers costs associated with Medicare premiums, deductibles, and copayments for financially eligible individuals. Online applications are available at www.socialsecurity.gov/prescriptionhelp or through the Social Security hotline at 800-772-1213 (TTY: 800-632-0778).

For more information about GeorgiaCare and other services available to older Georgians and their families, visit the DHS Division of Aging Services at www.georgia.gov or call (866) 55-AGING (55-4464).

Macon/Central Georgia Calendar

CALENDAR NEWS

GUIDELINES

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Coliseum System

**Medicare Made Easy**

Mon., Nov. 14, 10-11:30 a.m., Coliseum Northside Hospital, Conference Room, 400 Charter Blvd., Macon. For complete information call Consult-A-Nurse at 478-746-4646.

**Advance Directives for Final Healthcare**

Mon., Nov. 14, 12-1 p.m., Coliseum Northside Hospital, Conference Room, 400 Charter Blvd., Macon. For complete information call Consult-A-Nurse at 478-746-4646.

**Surviving Together... Strive From Stroke (Diabetes):** 2nd Mon. every other month at 746-4646.

**Extending H.O.P.E. – Lymphedema Counseling:** 4th Tues., 12 p.m., Coliseum Northside Hospital, 340 Hospital Dr. 478-741-1355.

**Art Therapy Classes:** 2nd Thurs., 7 p.m., Houston Health Care, Activity Room, 478-405-4500.

**Focus on Healing Classes (Lebed exercise):** 4th Thurs., 7 p.m., Centerville SeniorCare, 3797 Northside Drive, Macon 478-757-7411.

**Helping Hands Grief Support Group:** 2nd Thurs., 7 p.m., Houston Health Care, Activity Room. Call 478-751-0189 for complete details.

**Golden Opportunities**

**The Wellness Center:** 3797 Northside Drive, Macon 478-757-7411.

**Weight loss support group.** Call 478-923-9771 for complete details.

**US TOO for Prostate Cancer Education**

Call 478-923-9771 for programs provided.

**Bipolar Support Group:** Meets every Thurs., 6-7:30 p.m., First Floor Conference Room, Coliseum Psychiatric Center, 478-741-1355.

**Camera**

**24-hour Maintenance**

**Cameras**

**1st Floor Classroom.** 478-751-0189.

**Bi-Polar Support Group:** Meets every Thurs., 6-7:30 p.m., First Floor Conference Room, Coliseum Psychiatric Center, 478-741-1355.

**Activity Group:** First Sat. every month, 1-3 p.m., Central Georgia Rehabilitation Hospital 3351 Northside Drive 478-201-6500.

**Support Groups**

**Bipolar Support Group:** Meets every Thurs., 6-7:30 p.m., First Floor Conference Room, Coliseum Psychiatric Center, 478-741-1355.

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CALENDAR
from page 9

Laurens County
• 4th Tues., 4 p.m., Benton House, 212 Fairview Park Dr., Dublin, 478-275-9888
• 1st Mon., 3:30 p.m., Sheridan Place, 504 Firetower Rd., Dublin, 478-275-4460
• 1st Thurs., 2 p.m., Carl Vinson VA Medical Center, 1826 Veterans Blvd., Dublin, 12-A Family Room, 478-272-1210, ext. 1228

Monroe County
• 4th Thurs., 6 p.m., Monroe County Hospital Dinning Hall Downstairs, 88 Martin Luther King, Jr., Dr., Forsyth, 478-647-1607
• Last Thurs., 7 p.m., Thomaston Upson County 3331 115 N. Madison Ave., Eatonton, 706-485-1210, ext. 2328

Putnam County
• 3rd Wed., 10 a.m., First Baptist Church, 1610, ext. 2328

Russell County
• 1st & 3rd Tues., 7-8 p.m., “Care Reflections, 302 S. Bethel St., Thomaston, 706-647-1607

Simpson County
• Assisted Living

Skull Creek
• 1st & 3rd Tues., 7-8 p.m., “Care Connection” facilitated by an Alzheimer’s staff member, 1-866-453-5550

Thomas County
• 1st & 3rd Tues., 10 a.m., Thomas County Hospital, 100 S. 5th Street, Thomasville, 478-751-2790, ext. 2328

Tift County
• 1st Thurs., 6 p.m., Tift County Hospital Dinning Hall Downstairs, 88 Martin Luther King, Jr., Dr., Forsyth, 478-747-8754

Union County
• Last Thurs., 7 p.m., Thomaston Reflections, 302 S. Bethel St., Thomaston, 706-647-1607

Telephone Support Group
• 1st & 3rd Tues., 7-8 p.m., “Care Connection” facilitated by an Alzheimer’s staff member, 1-866-453-5550

Tift County

Free Legal Services
Available to Seniors
The Macon Office of Georgia Legal Services provides free legal services to seniors (60 and over) as resources allow. We interview clients in the following counties BY APPOINTMENT ONLY: Bibb, Baldwin, Crawford, Houston, Jones, Monroe, Peach, Pulaski, Putnam, Twiggs and Wilkinson.

Call the Macon Office at 478-751-6261 for an appointment.

Meals on Wheels of Macon and Bibb County
Meals on Wheels of Macon and Bibb County needs volunteers to help deliver meals to home-bound clients. Volunteers must have a valid Georgia driver’s license and a positive attitude. If you can spare two hours a day one day a week, then you may just be the person needed. We especially need help on Thursdays and Fridays. Meals of Wheels is a wonderful organization which takes pride in everything it does. This program would not exist without volunteers. If you are interested in volunteering, please call Joyce Walker or Beverly McCard at 478-745-9140.

Macon-Bibb County Parks & Recreation Department Senior Center
1283 Adams Street, Macon, Georgia 31201; Phone: 478-751-2790, 478-751-9238; Daily activities 9:00-2:00

Senior Tax Assistance: Free confidential income tax assistance for senior citizens. Call Larry at 478-751-2790 for an appointment.

• Senior Citizen Choir: Mondays at 10:00, Macon-Bibb Senior Center, 1283 Adams St. Call Brenda for information at 478-751-2790

• Bowling: Fridays at Gold Cap Bowling Center, 10:30 to 12:30, $2.50 per game, $3.50 shoe rental

• Exercise: Monday, Wednesday & Thursday Evenings, 6:00 to 7:00 p.m.

Senior Center, 1283 Adams St. $40.00 per month Instructor: Juanita “Poppie” James

• Needle Craft: Our fiber craft room is open daily for quilting, crocheting, knitting and sewing.

Warner Robins Recreation Department, Senior Citizens Services Wellston Center
• AARP: 4th Wednesday of each month. John Echols, President, 478-953-5060

• NARFE: 2nd Wednesday of each month. Charles Farmer, President, 478-902-2453.


• Warner Robins Senior Citizens Social Club: 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month.

VANADIS Senior Activity Center
3rd Wed., 10 a.m., First Baptist Church, 3rd Wed., 10 a.m., First Baptist Church, 115 N. Madison Ave., Eatonson, 706-485-1331

Senior Center
Laurels of Warner Robins
706-485-3331

Senior News
***************

The Gospelaires Quartet

The Gospelaires Quartet is ready to sing at your Senior Meetings, Church, Reunions, Assisted Living Center or Nursing Home, as well as special Birthday Celebrations and Club Meetings.

For additional information call 478-929-3816.

Houston County Council
Of The Blind

The Houston County Council of The Blind meets the first Saturday of each month at the Centerville Lions Club located on Houston Lake Road voicing state and local concerns for the blind or visually impaired.

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404-668-2420
impaired. Fellowship and membership are welcomed.

Georgia Leathercrafters Guild
The Guild meets every second Sunday in the month at 2 p.m., at Kroger Company located at 4560 Forsyth Road. All who wish to learn and/or expand their knowledge of leather craft are invited. For additional information call 478-745-2320 or 478-934-7519, G. Woody in Cochran.

Health Education
The Office of Health Education at the Macon-Bibb County Health Department has brochures/ pamphlets on various topics available in English and Spanish. These materials are available to businesses, community-based organizations, and faith-based organizations upon request. For additional information call 478-749-0113.

The Macon Arts Alliance's Arts Gallery
451 Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.
478-742-9700

Massie Lane Gardens
For information call 478-967-2358 or www.carmelias-acs.com (The American Camellia Society.)

Macon Little Theatre
4220 Forsyth Road, Macon
Reservations: 478-471-PLAY

Museums of Arts & Sciences
4182 Forsyth Road, Macon

Theatre Macon
438 Cherry Street, Macon
478-746-9485

Tubman Museum
340 Walnut St., Macon
www.tubmanmuseum.com

Middle Georgia Art Association Gallery
2330 Ingselle Ave., Ingleside Village, Macon, 478-742-9703, middlegeorgiaart.org. Tues.-Fri., Noon-5 p.m.; Sat., Noon-3 p.m.

Divorce Recovery Group
First Baptist Church of Macon, located at 511 High Place, is offering a Divorce Recovery Group for those interested. The meetings are held on Wednesday evenings. Child care and children’s activities will be provided.

For additional information call the church office at 478-742-6485.

DivorceCare Offered
By Central Baptist Church
Divorced? Separated? Find help at DivorceCare.
DivorceCare is a special weekly seminar and support group for people who are separated or divorced. The group meets at Central Baptist Church located at 1120 Lake Joy Road. Warner Robins. Childcare is provided for babies through 5th grade. For additional information call 478-953-9319.

Bloomfield United Methodist Church
5511 Bloomfield Rd., Macon
478-397-6568 or 478-788-2262

“Back To The Cross” will be in concert at 6 p.m. on Sun., Nov. 6.

NAMI Central Georgia
National Alliance on Mental Illness
Barabra Long, Executive Director
478-328-0308
(Call for details on events)

Monthly support group for consumers and families. Last Mon. each month, 7 p.m., New Hope, 100 Story Road, Warner Robins. Free. Refreshments.

SOS (Survivors of Suicide) Support Group
First Thurs. each month, 7-8 p.m., Houston County Medical Center, Board Room next to the coffee kiosk, Watson Blvd., Warner Robins. For loved ones of those who have experienced suicide. Free. 478-472-3399

FAMA Meetings
FAMA (Families Against Methamphetamine Abuse) meets the 3rd Tues. of each month, 6 p.m., Centerville Lions Club. Call 478-953-6955 or visit www.middlegafama.org for complete details.

Substance Abuse Help Available
Did you know alcohol is the most used drug in the country and it’s the number one abused substance among teens? Although most parents don’t realize it, they are the best prevention tool around when it comes to underage drinking. Children do listen to their parents. Not only can you be a good role model for drinking behavior, you can have a meaningful and honest discussion with your children about alcohol, its pitfalls and risks. If you need more information or help, Hodac, Inc., is here to lend a hand. You can talk to trained professionals 24-hours a day, seven days a week by calling the Georgia Helpline at 800-338-6745. Making that call puts you on the road to answers or so why not call today.

Volunteers Needed
FAMA (Families Against Methamphetamine Abuse), needs volunteers to assist seniors and persons with disabilities with Medicare problems, fraud, and abuse. Must be computer savvy. Rewarding volunteer work. Call Butch Swinney, GeorgiaCare Coordinator for the Middle Georgia Regional Commission/Area Agency on Aging, at 478-751-6489 or email: bswinney@mg rc.org for details.

MGKARA Meeting
The MGKARA (Antique Automobile Club of America - Middle Georgia Region) meets on the 3rd Thurs. each month, 7 p.m., at the Old Taylor County Buffet located at 1208 Russell Pkwy., Warner Robins. Come early to eat and greet! A favorite requested antique car restoration is welcome. Call Rosemary Chaney at 478-987-9559 after 5 p.m. for information.Forsyth-Monroe County Convention & Visitor's Bureau.

Event of the Year
Mark Ballard will present an Evening of Comedy on Nov. 5th, 7:30 p.m., at the Wester Center located at 155 Maple Street in Warner Robins to benefit The Heart of Georgia Developmental Disabilities Ministries. Silent Auction will be held beginning at 6:00 p.m. Tickets for the event at $15. For information call 478-953-2992 or 478-396-1773.

Heart of Georgia Chapter 2
Blue Light Star Mothers of America, Heart of Georgia Chapter 2, meets the first Monday each month at 7:30 p.m. at Coldwell Banker’s SSK Realtors located at 470 S. Houston Lake Road, Warner Robins. For additional information contact PJ Johnson at 478-284-6905 or email: chief@britex.net.

Macon Women’s Club
Welleston Center located at 155 Maple Street in Warner Robins to benefit The Heart of Georgia Developmental Disabilities Ministries. A Silent Auction will be held beginning at 6:00 p.m. Tickets for the event at $15. For information call 478-953-2992 or 478-396-1773.

Crazies in the Car Show
Warner Robins Christian Center
The Blue Star Mothers of America, Heart of Georgia Chapter 2, meets the first Monday each month at 7:30 p.m. at Coldwell Banker’s SSK Realtors located at 470 S. Houston Lake Road, Warner Robins. For additional information contact PJ Johnson at 478-284-6905 or email: chief@britex.net.

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by CLAIRE HOUSER DODD

There is a pall over Fort Valley after Avera Drugs has its last prescriptions. The latest owner/operator, Gary Sheffield, has given this valiant fight to find another independent contractor to keep this 141 year old business up and running and carrying on its singular distinction of being the oldest business in the Valley plus the 2nd oldest continuous operating pharmacy in the State of Georgia. Avera Drugs was also a bit of a museum, holding antique containers and some old apothecary equipment. It is like we have lost an old, respected and beloved friend.

Most of us old guard mainly remember the thick and delicious malted milk shakes made by Bill Hopkins while he was attending Fort Valley High School. While Bill was working as a “soda jerk” at Avera Drugs, he dreamed of the day when he would become the pharmacist and owner too. His dream came true.

Bill sold the business to Gary in 1996 and then retired to Franklin, NC.

Many young people received their training and formative years at this store when it was Avera Drug Company. Among them were Malcolm Taylor, Roy Gilbert, Mary Beck Johns, Wiley Boudreaux, Charles Cato, Troy Whatley, Gordon Smith and Pete Peterson. Some went on to open their own drug stores and some worked for other drug stores, but all had outstanding careers due to their early training at the store.

It was called Anderson Drug company until Ben passed away in 1941 when the store became known as Avera Drug Company, and has remained that name for 71 years through four owners: Homer J. Avera (who began his career as a pharmacist in Tennille, GA) and then C.W. (Pete) Peterson, Mr. Avera’s son-in-law, became a partner after returning from the Korean War. After that W.P. (Bill) Hopkins (who had worked at the store at the age of 10) bought the drug store on January 1, 1967. The present and last owner, Gary Sheffield, took ownership in 1996.

We went over to CVS where Gary is currently holding court and his many customers can pick up their prescriptions. We saw a new but familiar face among the CVS workers and were lucky enough to share a few minutes in a private conversation with Gary. Gary lamented that he very much hated to have to close Avera’s but it looked as though he had only two choices, buy a new building or close the doors. His plans were to work for two more years; but, under the circumstances that arose, he decided that he was too old to buy a building and the only other option was to close. Gary reminded us that he is the owner of the Avera Drug Company, and has served the people of the Valley as Avera Drug Company. This leaves Stephen Lindsey of Anthoine Machine Shop on Railroad Avenue at the oldest remaining business in town, followed by William & James Khoury of Khoury’s Men’s Wear on Main Street in Fort Valley. The Khoury’s have just recently celebrated 75 years of being in business. Many thanks to James Khoury for providing the photos of Avera Drug Company!

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