

Area IX—Flathead County

Agency on Aging NEWSLETTER

November 2016

40 11th Street West, Kalispell

Medicare Open Enrollment

It's Important to Review Your Plans

The **Open Enrollment period for Medicare** is currently in progress and lasts until December 7th. This is the time you can choose different health plans and prescription drug coverage for the following year. Medicare health and drug plans can change each year, so it is very important to review the information your plan sends you and make sure the coverage will still meet your needs.

You can contact us for assistance. A counselor will help you review your current plan and compare it to other options. Your counselor can also offer you a *Benefits CheckUp* to determine if there are other programs available to help you with medical, drug, food, and other living expenses.

Call 758-5730 to make an appointment.

New West Health Services recently announced they will cease operations and discontinue providing health insurance in Montana. People with a Medicare Supplement or Advantage plan through New West will need to get new coverage through another health insurer. New West customers needing assistance should contact their local insurance agent or call the New West Customer Service Department at 1-888-873-8049.

Proposals to Add New Funding for Area Agencies on Aging

The upcoming state legislative session offers opportunities to expand funding for Area Agencies on Aging in Montana.

Governor Bullock's proposed budget calls for an additional \$1.5 million for core AOA programs that support older Montanans to live independently and stay engaged in their communities, such as home delivered meals, transportation, connection to community resources and respite services that give family members a break from caregiving.



In addition, the bipartisan joint legislative Interim Committee on Children, Families, Health and Human Services is backing a bill that would provide an additional \$1.5 million to Area Agencies to expand home and community-based services for

individuals with Alzheimer's and related dementias and their family caregivers.

If AOA services have helped you or your family, please consider contacting the Governor and your state legislators to tell them your story and let them know how important the new funding is to meet the growing needs in our community.



Phone: 406-758-5730

Fax: 406-758-5732

Web: flathead.mt.gov/aging

Serving older adults and people with disabilities in Flathead County.



Open House Highlights

The *South Campus Open House* held October 12-14 included building tours, musical entertainment, a Medicare 101 class, NFL Football Party, *Care Farm* Film, healthy aging classes, information about AOA services and other county departments, and many Kalispell Senior Center activities.

A Ribbon Cutting Ceremony in the dining room formally kicked off the 3-day event. It was standing-room only as AOA Director Lisa Sheppard gave opening remarks and special acknowledgements, followed by comments from Flathead County Commissioners, Pam Holmquist and Gary Krueger, and former Commissioner, Dale Lauman. Congressman Ryan Zinke addressed the audience, and special messages were read from Senators Jon Tester and Steve Daines.

We greatly appreciate all those who helped make the Open House such an enjoyable experience for the nearly 500 people who attended. We thank: Dr. Pamela Roberts, MaryAnn Gill, and April Terry from Summit Medical Fitness Center; Maarten Fisher, A-Plus Healthcare, and Sanne Hijlkema, producer, for showing the *Care Farm* Film; sponsors of door prizes including Rosauers, Salon G and Sportsman Ski Haus; and all the volunteers who served as greeters and tour guides.

Now that we're in our new home, call or visit to find out more information about how you can get involved!



People who have Medicare may be eligible for other benefits. A few minutes spent on filling out a *Benefits CheckUp* could result in big savings.

If you are having difficulty paying for prescriptions, insurance premiums, or food and utilities, call us for a free screening. We'll also help you fill out applications and follow-up to make sure that you receive the benefits you deserve.

Call 758-5730 for an appointment.

Bring information on your income, resources and expenses.



Flathead County Public Transit Planning Meeting

Th, Dec 15th, 4:00-6:00 pm

South Campus Conference Room
40 11th Street W, Kalispell, 2nd floor
County residents invited to attend and provide input on public transit services.

Join Us!

NFL Football Party

In the Dining Room

Doors Open at 6 pm

**Thursday
Nights!**

**Big Screen TVs!
\$5 Food Bar
Fun!**

