

Haywood COMMUNITY CONNECTOR

Haywood Community Connections Quarterly Newsletter

Summer, July, 2010

“Elderly Couple Found Shot To Death”

These tragic words constituted a by line in a recent issue of *The Mountaineer*. Law enforcement officers discovered the bodies of a 79-year old couple. The wife was shot in her bed. The husband’s body was found outside in what police believe was a murder/suicide. The wife was an Alzheimer’s patient. The husband cared for her, and he had recently received his own dire diagnosis of Parkinson's Disease. One can only imagine the kind of stress this gentleman was experiencing. Caregiving takes its toll on the caregiver. So much so, that the caregiver often passes away before the care recipient.

This tragic case underscores the need for programs and services that can bring much needed respite to caregivers. It also underscores the mission of Haywood Community Connections to supply the community with information and increase awareness of resources. It validates the existence of the Senior Leadership Program and Senior Resource Teams.

Caregivers need to know they are not alone. Help is available. We need to give them that message. In our county there are folks who day in and day out care for a loved one. Many of them are also trying to raise children, go to work, and still provide care. These people are heroes. They expect no praise – they are only doing what they consider their duty. These caregivers carry a large load, and need assistance. Some people have an easier time asking for help than others. Some would ask, but don’t know to whom they should turn with their request.

We live in a society where we often do not know our neighbors – often we do not even know their names. This needs to change. A recent article in AARP told of a community in another area of North Carolina where folks are taking it upon themselves to get to know each other and commit to looking out for each other. This willingness to follow through and help a neighbor allows them to continue to live in their community as long as possible. The article told of one resident who had a traumatic fall and had to take medical leave from her job. Her neighbors walked her dog, fixed her meals, and took her to doctor appointments.

This sounds like a pretty good idea and is related to the concept on which Haywood Community Connections was built – “neighbor helping neighbor.” This is the philosophy behind our Senior Resource Teams. Become familiar with the team in your community. Call on them if you need information. They can help you find programs and services that will give you needed support. If you know of a caregiver who seems to have no support in place, talk to him/her. Give help if you can. Simply knowing about programs and services that are available and sharing that information with caregivers will be helpful. If you do not know the information, refer them to the Senior Resource Team in their community by calling Haywood Community Connections: 452-2370.

The recent tragedy can be a wake up call to all of us – a call to become more involved. Let’s find the other caregivers in our county and help them find assistance that may avert another tragedy. Let them know someone cares, and help is available. They do not have to carry the burden alone.

-Victoria Young





Joan Kennedy, Social Worker at Haywood Regional Medical Center instructs seniors regarding Advanced Directives. Joan, along with Jamie Arnold, Attorney at Law, held an information session on June 24th at Haywood Community Connections. Seniors discovered why it is important to have Advanced Directives in place and what they entail.



Senior Resource Team members enjoyed food and fellowship at the second quarterly meeting held June 30th at Haywood Community Connections. This quarter (April through June, 2010) the members turned in volunteer hours totaling 2,240 hours at a value of \$42,560.



Haywood County Veterans Services Officer Ronald Putnam spoke at the quarterly Senior Resource Team meeting on June 30th. He recently appeared before the U.S. Senate Committee on Veterans Affairs to present VA health care in rural areas. Putnam urged Senior Resource Team members to refer veterans to his office to apply for services to which they may be entitled. A transcript and video of his testimony before the Senate can be found at veterans.senate.gov/index.cfm. Click on Hearings, then click on Hearing: VA Health Care in Rural Areas.

Staff members Mattie Green and Yvonne Gold attended elder abuse training sponsored by the 30th Judicial Alliance and the Waynesville Police Department. If you are interested in having a training or presentation for a group (such as church, civic, etc.) contact Jeff Haynes or Kim Gardner at 30th Judicial Alliance, 452-2122.

There's Now a Doctor in the House

Beginning July 14th, Dr. Lisa Verges, a geriatric psychiatrist, will begin seeing patients (ages 65 and above) at 81 Elmwood Way, Waynesville. For an appointment, call 356-2820.

Updated Information Now Available

Haywood Community Connections is dedicated to helping seniors, people with disabilities, and caregivers find information they need. In an effort to ensure that information is as current as possible, our Resource Directory has recently been reviewed and updated. It can be accessed via our website at www.haywoodconnections.org. As a member of the Community Resource Connection of the Great Smokies, Haywood Community Connections also provides information and assistance to seniors, caregivers and persons with disabilities on a regular basis. Simply call 452-2370 for information regarding programs and services in Haywood County.

Clyde's Senior Resource Team

.....has been very busy. When the team decided to beautify their town, they didn't dream the project would bring so many different groups together. Mr. Alvin Justice donated dahlia bulbs. Students from Haywood Community College and staff from Haywood County Recreation and Parks were on hand to help plant the dahlias, and the fire department agreed to keep the plants watered. The Clyde team is in the process of establishing a Caregiver's Library and Durable Medical Equipment Loan Closet at the Clyde Central United Methodist Church.

Victoria Young presents Inez Angus with a book for the new Caregiver Library. The Library is housed at Clyde Central United Methodist Church but will be available to the public. An opening date will be announced in the near future.



Betti Bumgardner, Senior Resource Team member, stands with Alvin Justice; Courtney McClure, a teacher and two students who helped plant dahlias at Clyde Central High School.

Inez Angus with donated medical equipment for the Clyde Central United Methodist Church Loan Closet.



GOVERNOR'S ROUNDTABLES

Victoria Young, Director of Haywood Community Connections, participated in a Governor's Roundtable May 19th in Boone. A total of six roundtables were held state-wide April-June. The issues and ideas identified at the roundtables and submitted online will be compiled and summarized to lay the groundwork for a Governor's Conference on Aging planned during the North Carolina Conference on Aging, October 13-15. The conference will allow participants to develop policy recommendations and continue the work of developing public/private partnerships to meet the challenges of an aging society. The work of the roundtables and Governor's Conference will also inform and be reflected in the 2011-2015 State Aging Plan.



Roundtable participants: Brad Allen (NC Senior Games), Kay Gattis (NC Commission on Volunteerism and Community Services), Victoria Young (Haywood Community Connections), Lia Miller (Center for Creative Aging NC) and Dennis Streets (Director, Division of Aging and Adult Services)

A Smile

A smile costs nothing, but gives so much. It enriches those who receive it, without making poorer those who give. It takes but a moment, but the memory of it sometimes lasts forever. None is so rich or mighty that he can get along without it, and none is so poor but that he can be made rich by it. A smile creates happiness in the home, fosters goodwill in business, and is the countersign of friendship. It brings rest to the weary, cheer to the discouraged, sunshine to the sad, and it is nature's best antidote for trouble. Yet it cannot be bought, begged, borrowed, or stolen, for it is something that is of no value to anyone until it is given away. Some people are too tired to give you a smile. Give them one of yours, as none needs a smile so much as he who has no more to give. -B.J. Morbitzer

**Haywood Community Connections
Governing Council:**

- Mountain Projects, Inc., Lead Agency
- Haywood Community College
- Haywood County Board of Commissioners
- Haywood County Cooperative Extension Service
- Haywood County Department of Social Services
- Haywood County Emergency Management
- Haywood County Health Department
- Haywood County Recreation and Parks
- Haywood Regional Medical Center
- Mountaineer Publishing Company, Inc.
- Southwestern Commission, Agency on Aging
- United Way of Haywood County
- Inez Angus, Christianna Gibson, and
Tony Beaman

Haywood Community Connections Staff: Victoria Young, Project Director; Yvonne Gold, Project Coordinator; Odile Ullah, Information Assistant; Mattie Green and Janet Burnham, Administrative Assistants; Shirley Stevenson, Information Aide



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TO:



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**“Better together”
To get involved**

- I would like to hear more about the project and determine where I might connect to its mission and volunteer my talents.
- A tax deductible gift in the amount of \$_____ is enclosed **payable to Mountain Projects, Inc., with a notation in the left-hand corner “Haywood Community Connections.”** This gift is in honor/memory of _____.

Name _____ Home Phone _____
 Address _____ Business Phone _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Email _____