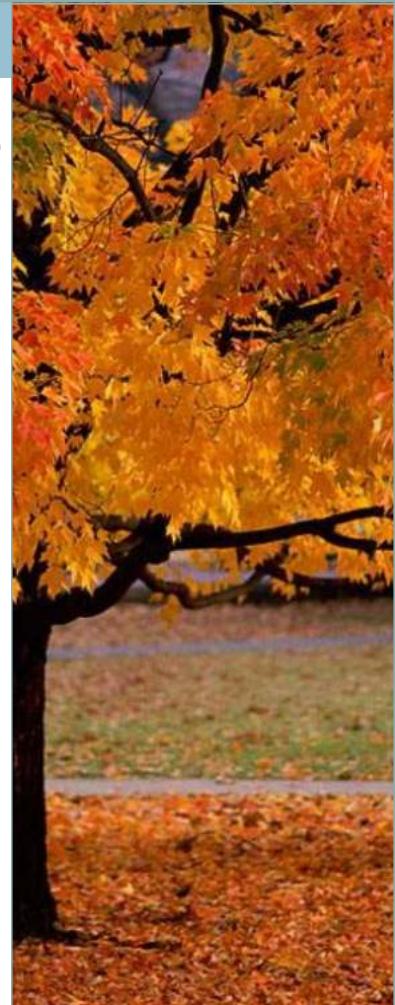


The Distinguished Reader

VNA
Community
Services



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Staying the Course

Through the months of July and August, the VNA has flourished in many respects. First and foremost, we have attained a very resourceful and supportive team that is dedicated to assisting the older adults of Knox County. Also, the VNA has raised over \$50,000 from various locations within the community as a means to provide even more support and resources for the community. Furthermore, we have taken on an initiative to offer help and get to know the caregivers of the community.

To do this, we have had several classes to help our older adults and family caregivers. These classes consisted of A Matter of Balance, a course designed to provide confidence and independence for our older adults, and Stress Busters, a course for those family caregivers providing care for those with Alzheimer's and Dementia Related Diseases (ADRD). Furthermore, we have provided over 6,000 meals with our food security programs in the last two months alone to the older adults of the community. Along with that, we have also helped over 100 older adults of the community with our annual Senior Farmer's Market Nutrition Program. And soon we will be beginning our annual open enrollment for Medicare. This open enrollment begins October 15th and will last until December 7th.

The VNA has very much been staying the course with our services and resources. Whatever situation you may be in, we are more than happy to offer the support and kindness of our team. If you ever have any questions about the different services that we provide, please call us at (309)342-1152 or come out to visit our office at 2262 Grand Ave in Galesburg. Come and see what ways we here at the VNA can help you.

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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- VNA has raised over \$50,000 from various external sources
- Resources for helping those with Alzheimer's and Related Dementias
- Michael Bennett won the 5 Under 40 Award

Coffee for Caregivers



As part of our goal to reach out to Family & Friend Caregivers within the community, we have begun our Coffee for Caregivers program. This program is targeted for those that are family caregivers for older adults. You may not think you qualify as a family caregiver; however, if you provide any sort of care or support for an older adult, then that would mean you can qualify for support from us here at the VNA.

The VNA already offers many ways to support those who care for others. Whether it is classes on how to deal with stress, seeking counseling

from resources within the community or respite and home help referrals, we are more than happy to provide any and all support we can.

However, as part of our initiative, we have been visiting local coffee shops in the community and paying for a cup of coffee for caregivers. We would like to get to know you, your story, and discover the ways that we can help you and your loved ones. The Coffee for Caregivers program will meet from 8am-9am at local coffee shops within the community. Follow us on Facebook for updates on the event and location.

"We would like to get to know you, your story, and discover the ways that we can help you and your loved ones."

Progress at the VNA

Oftentimes at the VNA, the Executive Director (Michael Bennett) highly commends the work of his program director, his caseworkers, his administrative staff, and his kitchen staff.

However, those of us at the VNA that are part of this team would like to commend Michael for all that he has done for us as a group. Just within the last two months, Michael has raised over \$50,000 from various external funding sources in the community. He has spear-headed many projects, such as our volunteer resources, our community garden boxes, and most recently our caregiver initiative. Also, Michael has been able to provide a full time working model with added medical benefits for his staff here. Through much effort, Michael has been able to create an environment that is both welcoming and supportive for both his staff and clientele. If you would like to be a part of the support for the amazing work and progress that is happening here at the VNA, then come join us for all our services and initiatives.





"There are many places within the community ready to provide information or support so you and your loved ones can live happily and safely."

ADRD Awareness

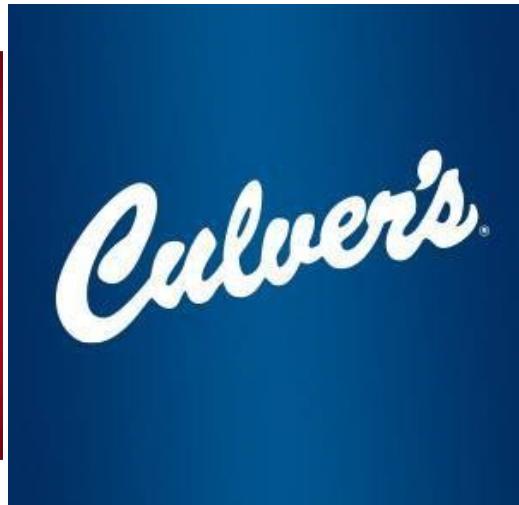
As we have seen many hot days throughout this summer and will soon be moving into the cold months of winter, we would like to draw some awareness for those older adults who may be struggling with Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias (ADRD). It can be a challenging lifestyle to manage and live with ADRD for the caregiver and care recipient. If you have noticed signs from a loved one that are concerning for you (easily confused, often forgetful, wandering, losing things, repeating questions, mood swings), there are options for you to seek help.

You can reach out to your local Alzheimer's Association for resources and support. Alternatives for Older Adults offers services for both caregivers and care recipients. The VNA receives emergency funding targeted for those with ADRD to provide in home and medical support each year. Also, we provide a Stress Busters course to help provide caregivers with information and support on caring for someone with ADRD. If you're ever worried about your loved one within their home, you can reach out to TRIAD to do a wellness check for you. There are many places within the community ready to provide information or support so you and your loved ones can live happily and safely.

5 UNDER 40 AWARD

On August 24th, Michael Bennett, our Executive Director, attended the Galesburg Area Chamber Annual Dinner. Michael received the 5 Under 40 Award at this dinner. The 5 Under 40 Award is one that celebrates individuals as rising leaders and who are dedicated to making a meaningful difference in the local community who are 40 years or younger. The VNA is proud to announce this for Michael as we see him as a very extraordinary Director of our building and we appreciate all the change and progress that he's created for the community of Galesburg.





Support local community
businesses that support the VNA.



Caregiver Counseling Office Hours

In an effort to provide advisory services for caregivers for older adults as well as grandparents raising grandchildren, we have partnered with Alayna Lucas from Alternatives for Older Adults to offer Caregiver Counselor Office hours. Alayna will be at the VNA every 1st Thursday of each month from 9am-10am for anyone who would like to come in for counseling services. Alayna is more than happy to discuss any issues relating to caregiving as well as answer any questions that you may have.



"The resources within Knox County focused not only on food but also housing and transportation for those in need."

Resources from the Hunger Initiative

VNA met at the Jameson Center in Monmouth with other organizations in Western Illinois as a means to discuss current and upcoming resources within various communities. The resources within Knox County focused not only on food but also housing and transportation for those in need.

One of the biggest resources coming to Knox Count is the Western Illinois Regional Counsel (WIRC) Office. This branch will be opening in Galesburg in September. The WIRC Will have funding for heating, cooling, and weatherization. The office hours will be 8-4pm Monday through Friday. If you'd like to reach out to the WIRC office for more information, you can reach them at (309)837-2997.

Another major resource is the Salvation Army which will provide resources for those who are struggling with housing within Knox County. They will be receiving more funding soon to offering more assistance for housing with the community.

Also, transportation for any Housing Authority client will begin September 2023 through Galesburg Transit office. Transportation will be free for the client.

Finally, Galesburg High School will be providing kitchen starter baskets for those in need. These kitchen baskets will provide a variety of items to offer supplies for those who may be lacking ways to make a hot meal for themselves.



For more information about any of these programs and resources coming to Knox County, reach out to the VNA.

VNA COMMUNITY SERVICES

VNA is the premier senior social services agency of Knox County. It is our mission to provide access to services and programs that either maintain or improve the quality of life for the seniors of our community allowing them to remain thriving in their homes.



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...better with age



From the Director's Desk

As the seasons change, so does the time for a crucial period in the healthcare calendar – Medicare Open Enrollment. It's that time of year when individuals aged 65 and older, as well as those with qualifying disabilities, can make changes to their Medicare plans. The upcoming Open Enrollment season, which typically runs from October 15th to December 7th, is a prime opportunity to review and adjust your healthcare coverage to align with your evolving needs.

Medicare Open Enrollment isn't just a formality; it's a chance to take control of your healthcare journey. Your health needs might change from year to year, and so could your financial circumstances. This period allows you to switch between Original Medicare and Medicare Advantage, change your prescription drug coverage, and fine-tune your supplemental insurance. By being proactive, you ensure that

you're not locked into a plan that no longer suits your requirements.

Consider Open Enrollment as a check-up for your healthcare coverage. Life is dynamic, and your health priorities can shift. Maybe you've started new medications, found a specialist you prefer, or your current plan's network has changed. Reviewing your options annually can lead to cost savings and better coverage, ensuring you're getting the most out of your benefits.

First, mark your calendar for October 15th to December 7th. Next, gather essential documents such as your Medicare card, a list of your prescription drugs, and any correspondence from your current plan. Reflect on the past year – note any changes in your health status or anticipated changes in the coming year.

Research the plans

available in your area, considering premiums, deductibles, drug coverage, and provider networks. Don't hesitate to seek assistance from family members, friends, or our Medicare counselors if needed. Armed with information, you can make informed decisions that suit your unique healthcare needs.

Medicare Open Enrollment is more than an administrative task; it's an opportunity to safeguard your health and financial well-being. Don't miss out on the chance to evaluate your options, make necessary changes, and take charge of your healthcare journey. By participating actively in Open Enrollment, you're making a commitment to your own well-being – and that's a decision worth celebrating.

Remember, your health, your choice. Get ready for Medicare Open Enrollment and embrace the power of being prepared.

Sincerely,

Michael Bennett
Executive Director
VNA Community Services