

# AZ LINKS NEWSLETTER

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## Summer Is Officially Over!

With temperatures getting cooler, the action across the State is heating up! Along with all of the activities listed in this newsletter, I want to also note the [Arizona Caregiver Coalition](#) is hosting a Caregiver Summit on Nov. 5<sup>th</sup> at All Saints Catholic Church in Mesa. Additionally, the Arizona Alzheimer’s Task Force will be utilizing the month of November to highlight the release of the new Alzheimer’s State Plan: *A Framework for Action*. Watch for updates on the [AZ Links](#) website and learn about the Calls to Action to impact Alzheimer’s Disease!

**David Best - Arizona ADRC Project Director**

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## Please Welcome the Hunger Relief Program

*Submitted by Connie Weber, Public Information Officer for the Department of Economic Security*

The Coordinated Hunger Relief Program, which works with federal, state and local agencies and food banks to provide emergency food for those at risk of going hungry, is now part of the Division of Aging and Adult Services.

The program is not new to the Department of Economic Security (DES). It had previously been operating in the Division of Benefits and Medical Eligibility, which also operates the Supplement Nutrition Assistance Program, formerly known as food stamps.

The Coordinated Hunger Relief Program operates The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP). The federal program helps supplement the diets of low-income Americans, including elderly people, by providing them with emergency food and nutrition assistance at no cost. Staples like pasta, beans and other non-perishables go into these boxes and are distributed at local food banks. Homeless people can receive prepared TEFAP meals served in a congregate, or dining room, setting without income eligibility.

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## What's New at New Horizons Disability Empowerment Center?

*Submitted by Jean Lasher, Community Information  
Coordinator/Outreach New Horizons Disability  
Empowerment Center*

Please join us for the **New Horizons' Gala Dinner**. The theme this year is **"Together We THRIVE."** The event will be held at Hotel St. Michael's Ballroom, Prescott, Arizona, on **November 19, 2016**, starting at 6pm.

This is an opportunity to be part of our amazing year of transformation as New Horizons Disability Empowerment Center (NHDEC) faces a time of exciting growth and change! This year will be totally different than previous years, as we will be showing off our new facility. We will also be speaking about our next stage designed to propel NHDEC into the premier provider of services that transform the lives of people with disabilities across Northern Arizona. We have exciting news to share about our Veterans Service Center, Youth Programs, Sports and Nutrition Center and our rapid program expansion! Our plan is to get you excited to be an integral part of NHDEC efforts to empower people to live the life they choose. What we choose to do today will have an impact on tomorrow, that will shine for generations. What will you choose? For more information about New Horizons Disability Empowerment Campus and our exciting plans, contact NHDEC at **928-772-1266** or see our website at [www.newhorizonsilc.org](http://www.newhorizonsilc.org).

## AMIGOS DEL VERDE VALLEY VOLUNTEER COALITION BRINGS PARTNERSHIPS AND COMPASSION TO TRANSFORM NEIGHBORHOODS

*Submitted by Sherry Twamley, Amigos Del Verde Valley*

By transforming a manufactured home in Cottonwood, Arizona, *Amigos* helped improve the entire city block through this service project. More importantly, they also made it possible for a very low income, mentally and physically challenged elderly woman, to remain safe in her home.

*Amigos'* senior veteran carpenters and handymen replaced missing and rotting fascia boards, replaced skirting, installed sturdy safety rails, installed a threshold, made stair repairs, and painted the exterior of the home. They also completed at least three major yard cleanups, which required three large truckloads of yard debris to be transferred to the landfill. In August 2016, more than 20 volunteers, including U. S. Congressman Paul Gosar, came to help *Amigos* paint the exterior of the home and finish the yard work.

Since October 2013, *Amigos* has helped 66 very low income homeowners stay safe in their homes with exterior home repair and revitalization projects. Take a look at their website at <http://amigosdelverdevalley.org/>.



# Congratulations



## Arizona Leadership Gets National Recognition

*Submitted by Kurtis Kegley, Administrative Assistant, Area Agency on Aging, NACOG*

This July at the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging (n4a) conference, Mary Beals-Luedtka, Area Agency on Aging NACOG director, was honored with the coveted ***Excellence in Leadership*** Award recognizing leaders in the field of aging. Every year nominations for the award are received and reviewed by a committee of esteemed colleagues across the nation to recognize outstanding leadership. The focus is demonstrated leadership capabilities at the local, state or national level in advancing the mission of the Older Americans Act and preparing communities for our nation's rapidly aging population.

Mary has devoted over 25 years to the aging and disability population with Northern Arizona Council of Governments (NACOG) and has served as the Director of Area Agency on Aging since 2004. She served from 2006-2015 on the n4a Board of Directors and during that time was elected Treasurer, Second Vice-President and First Vice-President. She currently serves as a Board Member for the National Association of Nutrition and Aging Services Programs and is part of the Arizona Age Friendly Leadership Team. She was a delegate to the White House Conference on Aging in 2005 with both a Congressional and Gubernatorial nomination. She was chosen to attend the White House Conference on Aging at the White House in 2015, by the President of the United States.

Area Agency on Aging NACOG's mission is to provide answers on aging through resources, services and advocacy. For more information about the Area Agency on Aging NACOG, please call toll free at **1-877-521-3500** or visit [https://nacog.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=dep\\_intro&dept\\_id=7](https://nacog.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=dep_intro&dept_id=7)



## October is National Disability Employment Awareness Month

*Submitted by Jean Lasher, Community Information Coordinator/Outreach New Horizons Disability Empowerment Center*

Held annually each October by the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy, National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM) is held to educate communities about disability employment issues and celebrate the many and varied contributions of American's workers with disabilities. This year's theme is "Inclusion Works." "By fostering a culture that embraces individual differences, including disabilities, businesses profit by having a wider variety of tools to confront challenges," said Jennifer Sheehy, Deputy Assistant Secretary in the Office of Disability Employment Policy with the US Department of Labor. "Our nation's most successful companies proudly make inclusion a core value. They know that inclusion works. It works for workers, it works for employers, it works for opportunity, and it works for innovation."

Workplaces welcoming of the talents of all people including people with disabilities are a critical part of efforts to build an inclusive community and strong economy. All can play an important part in fostering a more inclusive workforce, one where every person is recognized for his or her abilities—every day of every month. For specific ideas about NDEAM, go to [www.dol.gov/ndeam](http://www.dol.gov/ndeam). For additional information you can also visit the Office of Disability Employment Policy at [www.dol.gov/odep/](http://www.dol.gov/odep/) or go to [www.disability.gov](http://www.disability.gov). You may want to subscribe to the Department of Labor Newsletter at [www.dol.gov](http://www.dol.gov) or call 1-866-487-2365.

## 21<sup>st</sup> Annual Caregiver Conference

*Submitted by Adina Wingate, Director Marketing and Public Relations, Pima Council on Aging*

On Friday, **November 18, 2016**, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. the Caregiver Consortium is hosting their annual conference, A Caregiver's Harvest: The Journey that Matters. The event will be held at the DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Tucson-Reid Park, 445 S. Alvernon Way, Tucson, Arizona.

Most of us will be caregivers at some time in our lives. We may care for a parent, spouse, other relative or a friend. The information provided at this conference will help you be prepared both practically and emotionally.

Register online at [www.caregiverconsortium.org](http://www.caregiverconsortium.org). For more information or questions, contact Julie Bubul at **520-235-4065** or email [caregiversarizona@gmail.com](mailto:caregiversarizona@gmail.com).

## Alzheimer's Disease Fact Sheet

Visit the Alzheimer's Disease Education and Referral Center's website. The new fact sheet can be found at:

<https://www.nia.nih.gov/alzheimers/publication/alzheimers-disease-fact-sheet>



## PCOA 31ST Annual Medicare Update Conference

*Submitted by Adina Wingate, Director Marketing and Public Relations, Pima Council on Aging*

This year marks the 31<sup>st</sup> annual conference that brings together adults who are about to turn 65 and eligible to enroll in Medicare and those who are already Medicare beneficiaries. The purpose of the conference is for the future beneficiaries and current beneficiaries to learn the basics about Medicare and compare the costs and coverage in the many different plans marketed by insurance and healthcare providers in Pima County during the annual open enrollment period.

Our annual conference is a series of five seminars that are scheduled at different sites in metro Tucson, Oro Valley (northwest corridor) and Green Valley to give the public convenient options. Each seminar is 3 hours and is presented by a Medicare department staff specialist. The popular series of events are free and open to the public.

In the context of providing Medicare information and consultations, Pima Council on Aging (PCOA) houses the Arizona State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) office in Pima County, offering a no-cost, one-to-one personal health benefits counseling program for Medicare beneficiaries and their families or caregivers.

PCOA Medicare counselors can explain options, assist in comparing plans, and explain how Medicare works with other insurance plans. Trained staff and volunteers provide unbiased information and can help with Medicare eligibility and benefits; original Medicare; Medigap insurance; Medicare Advantage plans; understanding and enrolling in Medicare Part D; Long Term Care Insurance and Medicare and AHCCCS.

The SHIP is an independent program funded by the Administration for Community Living and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services and is not affiliated with the insurance industry.

The Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) is a SHIP program that empowers older adults to prevent healthcare fraud. This program recruits and trains retired professionals and other older adults who provide presentations about how to identify potential scams and other fraudulent activity; protect personal information including Medicare and Social Security numbers; detect errors on Medicare Summary Notices or Explanations of Benefits; and report suspected fraud or abuse to the proper authorities.

This year, we are partnering with AARP Arizona to offer one of the five sessions in Spanish for adults at a well-known local community site, the El Pueblo Regional Center (101 W. Irvington Road, Tucson). ***See page 7 for a listing of the five seminars that are being offered.***



## The Be Med Smart Coalition Launches Website

*Submitted by Adina Wingate, Director Marketing and Public Relations, Pima Council on Aging*

The Centers for Disease Control reports that in 2013, more than 12,000 Baby Boomers died of accidental drug overdoses which is more than the number who died in car accidents or from influenza and pneumonia. Opioid abuse is the cause of 41% of these deaths. Also reported is that 59% of accidental deaths of older adults occur from mismanagement of other prescription drugs and over the counter medicines and or vitamins and supplements.

An increasing number of elderly patients nationwide are on multiple medications to treat chronic diseases, raising their chances of dangerous drug interactions and serious side effects. Often drugs are prescribed by different specialists who do not communicate with each other. If those patients are hospitalized, doctors making the rounds add to the list and some of the drugs they prescribe may be unnecessary or unsuitable. "This is America's other drug problem — polypharmacy," said Maristela Garcia, director of the inpatient geriatric unit at UCLA Medical Center in Santa Monica, California. "And the problem is huge."

The **BeMedSmart Coalition** is the first prevention program in Pima County addressing medication misuse and abuse in older adults. The website [www.bemedsmart.org](http://www.bemedsmart.org), offers education and resources. You can also learn about updates on the coalition's community engagement.

The **BeMedSmart Coalition** is open to anyone interested in the issue! You can support our prevention efforts in a number of ways:

- Attend our meetings
- Distribute educational materials to your family, friends, social club, or professional staff
- Identify presentation opportunities with older adults, staff or caregivers
- Promote BeMedSmart in social media opportunities within professional organizations
- Engage in planning, data collection and networking

Our coalition can offer benefits for your organization, agency or health care service

- Resources for you and your clients/consumers/members
- Presentations for your staff/volunteers/members
- Representation on prevention issues at the local and state level
- Regular news and updates about state, regional and national efforts
- Connections to amazing people
- Recognition on the BeMedSmart website

For more information on the BeMedSmart Coalition or the PCOA initiative, please contact Sally Krommes at **520-305-3425** or [skrommes@pcoa.org](mailto:skrommes@pcoa.org).

## PCOA 31<sup>st</sup> Annual Medicare Update Seminar Locations

*Submitted by Adina Wingate, Director Marketing and Public Relations, Pima Council on Aging*

The seminar dates and locations are listed below. Individuals are asked to register online at [www.pcoa.org/medicare-conference](http://www.pcoa.org/medicare-conference). If you cannot register online then call Pima Council on Aging (PCOA) Help Line at **520-790-7262** in Tucson for Medicare Update Conference registration assistance. Seating is limited at each of the five seminar locations in Tucson, Oro Valley and Green Valley.

- *Thursday, October 27<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 a.m.* at Ellie Towne Flowing Wells Community Center at 1660 W. Ruthrauff Road, Tucson
- *Saturday, October 29<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 a.m.* at TMC Marshall Conference Center at 5301 E. Grant Road, Tucson
- *Friday, November 4<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 a.m.* at St. Mark's Catholic Church, Parish Hall at 2727 W. Tangerine Road, Oro Valley
- *Wednesday, November 9<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 a.m.* at Green Valley Recreation Inc., Santa Rita Springs, Anza Room at 921 W. Via Rio Fuerte, Green Valley

And, **in Spanish:**

- *Thursday, November 3<sup>rd</sup> 1:00 p.m.* at El Pueblo Recreation Center, Activity Center, Multi-Purpose Room, at 101 W. Irvington Road, Tucson

There is no charge to attend a seminar, but registration is required. Each session is a full two hour talk followed by a one hour question and answer period.

###

PCOA puts on the annual Medicare Update Conference seminars in collaboration with state, county, municipal and faith-based organizations. Among them are Tucson Medical Center, Tucson Parks and Recreation, Pima County Parks and Recreation, St. Mark's Catholic Church in Oro Valley, Green Valley Recreation Inc., the State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) and Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP).

## Updates from the Social Security Administration

*Submitted by Jack Burns, Public Affairs Specialist in Arizona, Social Security Administration*

The Social Security Administration introduced the expansion of online services for residents of Arizona through “my Social Security” at [www.socialsecurity.gov/myaccount](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/myaccount). United States citizens age 18 or older and who are residents of Arizona can request a replacement SSN card online by creating a “my Social Security” account. In addition, they must have a United States domestic mailing address, not require a change to their record (such as a name change), and have a valid driver’s license, or state identification card in some participating states (Arizona is a driver’s license state only).

Below is a list of other services available online:

- Request replacement Medicare card
- Apply for Social Security benefits
- Get your Social Security Statement
- Appeal a decision
- Find out if you qualify for benefits
- Estimate your future benefits
- Get your SSI and Medicare verification letter

[www.socialsecurity.gov/myaccount](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/myaccount)



*Continued from page 1, Hunger Relief Program*



People experiencing homelessness must meet state income eligibility requirements in order to receive TEFAP food that is not served in prepared meals.

This summer, under the guidance of Program Administrator Linda Hamman, the Coordinated Hunger Relief Program has been able to take advantage of millions of dollars’ worth of so-called “bonus” foods made available through the U.S. Department of Agriculture Emergency Food Assistance price support and surplus removal program. Hamman works with local food pantries and food banks to store these bonus perishable items that other states aren’t in a position to take. This allows Arizona food banks to deliver to its client’s food like blueberries, eggs, raisins, frozen chicken and other items that don’t usually make its way into emergency food boxes.

In fiscal year 2016, the Food Bank Network helped 4.5 million Arizonans, and distributed 133 million pounds of food to low-income households.



## EYEKNOW.az.gov Is Live!

*From PRESS RELEASE dated September 12, 2016, Contact, Matt Roberts, Director of Communications with the Office of the Arizona Secretary of State*

The Arizona Secretary of State's Office in collaboration with the Department of Economic Security (DES), Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) and the Governor's Council on Blindness and Visual Impairment (GCBVI) proudly announces the launch of a web based information and referral service. The database of resources, located at [www.EYEKNOW.az.gov](http://www.EYEKNOW.az.gov), provides information on products and services from local, regional and national providers that are available to people in Arizona who are blind, visually impaired, or have combined hearing and vision loss.

This web based information and referral service is the next evolution of the print based "Arizona Resource Directory for Persons Who Have Vision, Hearing or Combined Hearing and Vision Loss" developed and distributed by DES/RSA. Visitors to [www.EYEKNOW.az.gov](http://www.EYEKNOW.az.gov) will be able to search for resources specific to the blind, low vision or combined hearing and vision loss populations. Arizonans can research options in a variety of categories including education, products for daily living, employment, recreation and advocacy. The information at EYEKNOW.az.gov will be available to be printed for distribution to individuals without web access who can benefit from the information, products and services.

## Newsletter Submissions

**Dear AZ Links Partners,**

We are always interested in hearing about programs and services available throughout the state. Highlighting staff and volunteers that make things happen is of great interest as well. Any announcements, staff changes, events, and information are welcome. Photos and brief notices can also be included. Please send newsletter items to: [TPankey@azdes.gov](mailto:TPankey@azdes.gov).

**This is your newsletter – let us know what you would like to see included.**

Next newsletter: January 2017

Deadline for submissions: December 15, 2016

*Past issues of the AZ Links Newsletter are available on our website at [www.azlinks.gov](http://www.azlinks.gov).*

## Mentors Needed for Support Groups

*Submitted by Jean Lasher, Community Information Coordinator/Outreach New Horizons Disability Empowerment Center*

New Horizons Disability Empowerment Center is in need of mentors. Take our mentoring courses to become a peer mentor where your knowledge and experience can be of help to another. Your skill and ability to overcome challenges will help others with similar disabilities including diabetes, brain injury, stroke, MS, Parkinson's, spinal cord injury, and a variety of other disabilities. Training is provided. Please contact Mary H. at **928-772-1266** with your questions and for more information.