



Compassion into Action

The Senior Connections Newsletter

Committed to helping seniors stay independent and in their own homes

SUMMER 2009

Senior Connections Staff Can:

- Develop individual solutions to problems
- Provide resource information
- Make referrals to organizations which can help
- Certify home energy assistance for seniors
- Arrange for Meals on Wheels and other home help
- Connect volunteers for you and your caregiver
- Arrange for local transportation, shopping and errands

Our services are provided to seniors age 60 and over, and to family care-givers, regardless of income.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Senior Connections Partners with StoryCorps	1-2
Senior Connections Annual Fundraiser	2
Senior Connections at Project Homeless Connect	3
The Many Benefits of Volunteering	3

Senior Connections Partners with StoryCorps

During the month of May, the national project known as StoryCorps brought its Airstream trailer mobile recording studio to Eugene. Before it arrived and was parked on Kesey Plaza, we contacted StoryCorps to see if we could partner with them – the answer was a resounding “Yes!” Since May is also national Older Americans Month, this was a perfect opportunity for us to interview some of our seniors.

Four seniors were interviewed in the soundproof booth, telling of their rich and lengthy lives – from childhood picadillos to cherished memories, from portraits of how life was growing up in the earlier part of the last century to how mothers influenced their children. One of the seniors, Gladys, was also celebrating her 99th birth-



Gladys during her StoryCorps Interview

day on the day of the interview. Area Coordinator Kim Kaufman, had a chance to wish her well on this stunning achievement – and this recording will echo those birthday wishes for all time. Each of the recordings made by StoryCorps is included in the Folklife Center at the Library of Congress, for current and future generations to hear.

Area Coordinator Suzanne Huebner-Sannes interviewed a new client, Charlie, along with her own dad. They had discovered a common thread – the USS Lexington, which was sunk in the Coral Sea during WWII. Richard had served on the ship while in the Navy, and Charlie, who loves to build model boats,

had the plans for that very ship! The two men shared some sweet moments, just talking and building on their new friendship with these common bonds.

My own privilege was to interview Addie, a lovely woman who has received services for a



Charlie and Richard with StoryCorps Van

long while from JoAnn Coker, our Eugene Area Coordinator. Addie and I had met about two weeks before –we both felt an instant connection. I almost cried as she described our friendship as “simpatico” from the get-go. We laughed, talked and shared. It was fascinating to hear her story unroll itself, a tale of compassion and caregiving, courage and commitment. She has cared for many of her family members during her long life, and told me that, in her mid-60’s, she went to LCC to earn her CNA certification. Our conversation ranged from describing life in the forest, moving from school to school while growing up, to driving a “span of mules” and the adventure of riding a bicycle for the first time as a young girl.

Continued on Page 2

“Their story, yours and mine - it's what we all carry with us on this trip we take, and we owe it to each other to respect our stories and learn from them”

~William Carlos Williams

StoryCorps Continued...

It must be said here that the two young facilitators for the StoryCorps booth, Alex Kelly and Carl Scott, were the utmost professionals. They were kind and respectful of our elders, from offering their capable hands for support to setting up the wheelchair ramp. Through their compassionate attitudes,

solicitous gestures and careful listening as they recorded these precious stories, we were in very good hands. StoryCorps is such a wonderful resource for capturing the voices and lives of ordinary Americans – but I must admit, none of the people whose stories I've heard seem “ordinary” in any way.

Find our more at www.storycorps.org



Addie telling her story

**Mark Your Calendars!!
Senior Connections
2nd Annual
Winestyles Event
and Raffle
to be held on
October 27, 2009**



Mark Your Calendars! We're hosting another WineStyles Fundraiser in October!

Because of the success of our first public fundraising event last fall, we are holding our 2nd Annual “Benefit Tuesday” Wine Tasting and Raffle from 5-9 p.m. on October 27th

WineStyles will donate 10% of all sales for the week of October 26-31 to Senior Connections, PLUS 100% of the profits from the wine tasting on the evening of the Benefit Tuesday event.

We surpassed our fundraising goal of \$5000 in 2008, and gave away more than

a dozen prize “packages” to a very happy group of winners. We're aiming for an even better raffle at our 2nd annual event! **The grand prize this year includes a hot air balloon trip for two.**

Benefit Tuesdays are a simple way to give back to the community, learn about our Senior Connections program and services, and enjoy a great taste of wine – all on a Tuesday night!

WineStyles is located at 2846 Willamette Street in Eugene.

To purchase raffle tickets, call Linda at 682-2092. Tickets sell for \$10 each, 3 for \$25 or 12 for \$100. To donate prizes please call Brandi at 682-4483.

Sponsors and Donors:

Balloon Flying Service of Oregon
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Marine Discovery Tours
Oil Can Henry's
Oregon Zoo
Papa's Pizza Parlor
Portland Chinese Garden
Science Factory
Sweet Life Patisserie
The Duck Store
Three Rivers Casino & Hotel
Supreme Bean Coffee Company
Vista Balloon Adventures
Willamalane Park and Recreation—Splash Lively Swim Center

Senior Connections at Project Homeless Connect 2009

Senior Connections hosted a table at Project Homeless Connect on March 6, 2009 at the Lane County Fairgrounds Exhibition Hall.

We were located in the Eligibility/Benefits section of the event. JoAnn Coker, Kim Kaufman and Paula Gourley managed the Senior Connections table.

There were **more than 57** visitors to the table, where we provided information, distributed items and conducted a variety of activities:

Answered questions and provided written resource material on Senior Connections, Family Caregiver Program, Elder Help

Volunteer Program, Senior and Disabled Services, and Oregon Prescription Drug Program.

Facilitated 10 On-site enrollments in the Oregon Prescription Drug Program (OPDP).

Referrals for Food Stamps and OHP – sent to the S&DS Partners located adjacent to us, who had three laptops on site for information retrieval and enrollments.

Distributed a variety of small toiletries (soap, shampoo, hair conditioner, lotion, deodorant, toothpaste, tooth brushes, foot powder). Unscented items were especially appreciated, and several people were careful

to read ingredients labels. Most took 3-4 toiletries. Most of these items were donated by the staff of Senior & Disabled Services.

Hand knitted woolen scarves were made for this event by a Senior Connections staffer. She set a personal goal to make one item per month for a year – and a dozen items were given to very pleased individuals.

This was also a great opportunity to network with colleagues from other agencies and learn more about their services, how we can connect, and benefit from each others' resources and expertise.



The Many Benefits of Volunteering

We can safely say that when you become an Elder Help volunteer assisting a Senior Connections client, both people will benefit from that experience. They regularly tell us so! Seniors understand that the assistance they receive helps them keep living independently. But how does volunteering help you? There are the intangibles—pride, satisfaction and a sense of accomplishment; all good reasons to volunteer. When we serve we increase our skills in problem solving, strengthen our communities, improve the lives

of elders, connect to others and transform our own lives. Recent research provided by the Corporation for National and Community Service, “has established a strong relationship between volunteering and health: those who volunteer have lower mortality rates, greater functional ability and lower rates of depression later in life than those who do not volunteer”. On the practical side, many find that volunteering adds to their job skills and improve job opportunities. Volunteering is truly a win-win.

Call Carole Ford, Volunteer Coordinator for Elder Help, at 682-3793 or email her at: cford@lcog.org and learn how you can become an Elder Help volunteer. Call today to find out how to begin receiving the many benefits of volunteering!



VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES!

Ways you can help seniors live independently in your community

- Elder Help—Errands, Home Help, Friendly Visits
- Escort Drivers—Provide transportation to medical appointments
- Family Caregiver Program—Respite for Caregivers

Please call Paula at 682-4038 for more information about volunteer opportunities!

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Phone: 541-682-4038
OR 1-800-441-4038
TTY: 541-682-4567
E-mail: pgourley@lcog.org



Community Services for Seniors and Family Caregivers

Committed to helping seniors stay independent and in their own homes.

Senior Connections has offices in six Lane County communities staffed with caring area coordinators and volunteers who provide a variety of services to seniors and family caregivers. We work to help seniors continue to live independently in their own homes.

If you are interested in help for yourself, or an aging relative, please call us. We can provide you with information about local, state and federal services and benefits available to seniors and family caregivers.

The caring Senior Connections staff and volunteers provide help to seniors age 60 years and over, and to family caregivers.

Senior Connections staff is one of the best resources in Lane County for information on where to turn for help.

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