

COUNCIL ON AGING - ANNUAL REPORT

The Hudson Council on Aging respectfully submits our Annual Report for the period July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2010.

Councils on Aging and Senior Centers provide advocacy and support systems empowering older adults to maintain their independence, improve their quality of life and prepare for life change. Councils on Aging are human services agencies that provide social services; wellness and fitness programs; information and referral services; case management; health promotion and prevention activities; socialization; volunteer opportunities; advocacy; and support systems through multipurpose senior centers that can be considered "community wellness centers." The activities, programs, and services of such centers are designed to: empower older adults to maintain independence; support frail elders in their homes; improve quality of life; provide some supportive services for individuals of all ages with disabilities; inform and assist families considering life change decisions concerning elder family members; and provide preventive health programming, advocacy, education, social, and leisure opportunities for active adults.

The Council on Aging is a nine member Board appointed by the Board of Selectmen. Duties of the Board who meet the first Wednesday of the month include supervision of the building, activities and programs planned for the elderly in Hudson. There are approximately 3,000 elderly (60+) in our community and all are encouraged to participate and avail themselves of services available. It is the mission of the Council on Aging to evaluate, promote and encourage new and existing activities and services that enhance the quality of life for elders in the Town of Hudson.

Due to the renovation project, the Hudson Senior Center staff continued to have office space at Town Hall for the entire FY10. Thanks to the welcoming environment at Town Hall we continued to see growth. Our Social Service Department had another excellent year with a 44% increase in Hudson seniors being served.

We were awarded a second incentive grant from Executive Office of Elder Affairs for a program addressing the barriers that prevent seniors from accessing mental health resources in the community. Dr. Erline Rosowsky; Clinical Professor at Harvard Medical School and author of "Personality Disorders in Older Adults" spoke on Personality Changes as we age. Over 80 people attended this most informative presentation. We also worked with Advocates Senior Support Services and offered smaller presentations on "Healthy Aging" which focused on nutrition, keeping your mind healthy, signs and treatment of depression, caregiver stress and dealing with dementia. All presentation offered free and confidential depression screenings with a licensed clinical social worker. Once again this program addressed the issues of stigma associated with mental health and stressed the importance of early detection and seeking help for depression and other mental health issues.

Interest in our new Wellness Program which includes; Beginners Yoga, Blood Pressure, Line Dancing, Water Aerobics, Walking Club, Fitness, Bone Density and Tai Chi continues to grow. In FY10 we had 260 plus individuals participate in our wellness programs 3230 times.

We would like to thank Hudson High School for the use of their computer lab. In FY10, Beverly Carraher taught two semesters of Computer I and Computer II classes. The computer lab offered the hands on training necessary to accomplish the goals of the class. Approximately 60 seniors participated in this educational opportunity.

STAFF

Our Senior Center has a dedicated staff consisting of; a Director, Administrative Secretary, Social Service Advocate (Outreach), and Bus Driver, all full time and funded by the Town of Hudson. We have added a part time Bi-Lingual Social Service Advocate who works 15 hours a week serving our Portuguese population. The success of this position is seen by the significant increase in Portuguese seniors utilizing our center, something we are very proud of. This position is paid by the Executive Office of Elder Affairs State Formula Grant. Our center also has a nutrition site manager who oversees the Meals on Wheels Programs funded by the Executive Office of Elder Affairs and BayPath Elder Services.

SERVICES

SOCIAL SERVICE ADVOCATE/OUTREACH: Health insurance, prescription drug plans, Medicare, public and private benefits continue to be a quandary for many seniors. The Director and both Social Service Advocates are SHINE Certified, (Serving Health Insurance Needs of Elders) and are capable and willing to help anyone who calls for assistance. In addition, home visits are made and needs assessments are formulated as staff work to help the elder remain in their own homes. Community Case management along with SHINE appointments increased another 44% from last year, with 2459 duplicated service units for 650 unduplicated case management and health insurance appointments for FY 2010. Fuel Assistance and S.N.A.P., Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (formally known as Food Stamps) application assistance is available at the Senior Center for all age groups in our community. We experienced a 57.5% increase from last year in fuel assistance applications. S.N.A.P. applications increased slightly last year.

TRANSPORTATION: We have two vehicles. One is an 8 passenger van with a wheelchair lift, and a 14 passenger van. Any Senior (55+) needing transportation for medical appointments, shopping, banking, etc between Hudson and Marlboro may call the center the day before to schedule your appointment. We also provide transportation for seniors to visit loved ones in nearby nursing homes.

NUTRITION PROGRAM: Our Meals on Wheels program continued to be housed at the First United Methodist Church. We appreciate their support and interest in this essential and worthwhile program. Despite the change in location we served 13,073 to 106 homebound seniors (an 18% increase). We also served 1091 congregate meals to Hudson seniors at the First United Methodist Church in Hudson, (a 19% increase).

TAX WORK OFF PROGRAM: Money was appropriated at Town Meeting to help the elderly pay real estate taxes. Seniors work 100 hours in various town departments to earn a maximum of \$500 to help pay taxes.

This past year we have seen significant growth in other areas as well. Through our community education programs, fitness/exercise, professional services, recreation/socialization programs, support services, volunteer opportunities and wellness programs we served 1447 individual people, a 5% increase for a grand total of 20,574 duplicated visits or participation in the programs/events mentioned above, which is a 6.7% increase.

The Board Members of the Council on Aging are most grateful to the "Friends of the Hudson Senior Center" who have provided financial support and encouragement over the past 30 years. Their hard work continues to support the senior center staff in their efforts to serve the Hudson senior population in the best way possible. We are fortunate to have them.

The Council on Aging wishes to "Thank" not only the Board of Selectmen, Executive Assistant and Finance Committee for their continued support each year, but also the Town of Hudson for supporting the Senior Center Renovation and Addition Project.

Respectfully submitted,

Ronald White, Chairman
Mary Saaristo, Vice Chair
Nina Smith, Treasurer
Melissa Esteves; Secretary
Glenna Karvoski

Ralph Barry
Anthony Monteiro
Justin Provencher
Dorothy McDonald

Janice Long, Director