

COUNCIL ON AGING - ANNUAL REPORT

The Hudson Council on Aging respectfully submits our Annual Report for the period July 1, 2010 to June 30, 2011.

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. As of the 2010 census we have 3915 elderly (60+) in our community (an increase of 938 since 2000) 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.

Some Highlights of FY 2011 beginning with our New Senior Center

The Hudson Senior Center staff moved into our newly renovated building in August 2010. Our Grand Opening was mid September 2010 with approximately 350 people in attendance. This event was exciting yet moving as we honored the work of seniors today and those before us who started the Council on Aging and the "Friends of Hudson Senior's Inc"; the fund raising arm of our Senior Center in the late 1960's. Their efforts actually laid the ground work for future seniors to carry the torch and continue their great works of service for our Town's elder population. This was also a day of pride and accomplishment as the long awaited "Vision" of the renovated Brigham Homestead, our senior center, finally became a reality. There are so many to thank for this incredible accomplishment. Thank you to everyone!

"The Effectiveness of Hand Exercises and Thermal Modalities in the Management of Rheumatoid Arthritis in the Hands: A Randomized Controlled Study".

Some of our seniors participated in a rheumatoid arthritis study. This study, conducted by a student in the Masters Program of Occupational Therapy at Salem State College, was designed to investigate the efficacy of thermal modalities such as paraffin wax, hydro (whirlpool), and hand exercises in managing the debilitating effects of Rheumatoid Arthritis in the hands. Measurements of strength, range of motion, coordination, edema, pain and function were taken before and after the study. This was a 6 week study requiring two to three times per week participation. Post measurements were taken two months following the conclusion of the study. Results found that the whirlpool group demonstrated the most change in all areas versus the other groups. This study, involving Hudson seniors, was also presented at the Mass Association of Occupational Therapy Conference in Oct. 2010. (We were very proud of our participants)

Hudson Senior Center partners with the Elder Community Care Program: a Mental Health Support Program for Older Adults

The Elder Community Care Program is a collaboration of agencies using in-home short term counseling and case management to avoid more costly interventions. ECC has significantly reduced depression and anxiety in older adults, while improving overall cognitive functioning and emotional health. The Hudson Senior Center's Social Service staff has seen first hand the benefits of the ECC program providing Licensed Clinicians to senior's in their own homes. We continue to work with ECC by making referrals to this exceptional program.

WELLNESS PROGRAMS

Interest in our Wellness Program continues! Programs include Beginners Yoga, Blood Pressure, Hearing Clinic, Podiatry, Line Dancing, Water Aerobics, Walking Club, Am and PM Fitness, Bone Density, and Tai Chi. In FY11 we had 648 individuals participate in our wellness programs 6291 times. That has doubled from Fy2010.

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. We added a part time Volunteer Coordinator position which is funded by a Title III Older American's 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.

VOLUNTEERS

Volunteerism at our center is at an all time high. The increase in membership and participation in activities and programs has resulted in the need for daily volunteers at our front desk to assist our Administrative Secretary. In addition to front desk support, we have 33 other volunteer positions. Librarians, gift shop staff, bridge instructor, meals on wheels drivers, and many more resulting in 10,934 hours of volunteerism in FY 2011. The pay equivalent for those jobs would have been \$111,602.00. Our volunteers make remarkable contributions to our center.

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 14% from last year, with 3326 duplicated service units for 745 unduplicated case management and health insurance appointments for FY 2011. 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 30% increase from last year in fuel assistance applications. S.N.A.P. applications increased slightly last year.

AARP TAX PREPARERS

Two AARP tax preparers assisted 100 seniors with their 2009 tax returns at not charge between the first week in February 2010 and April 15, 2010. A job well done!

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. In FY 2011 we had 189 people utilizing our transportation program 6772 times. (the larger number reflects round trips)

NUTRITION PROGRAM

Our Meals on Wheels program, which was at the First United Methodist Church while we were under construction, returned to the Senior Center for FY2011. The Meals on Wheels Program which is managed by BayPath Elder Services, served 13,577 meals to 152 homebound seniors (a 43% increase from last year). We also served 1676 congregate meals to Hudson seniors at our new center, (a 53% increase from last year).

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.

OVERALL GROWTH

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 1736 individual people, a 19% increase for a grand total of 31,956 duplicated visits or participation in the programs/events mentioned above, which is a 55% increase.

The COA Board and Friends of Hudson Seniors

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.

Respectfully submitted,

Anthony Monteiro, Chairman
Ronald White, Vice Chair
Nina Smith, Treasurer
Charles Corley; Secretary
Glenna Karvoski

Ralph Barry
Mary Saaristo
Melissa Esteves
Dorothy McDonald

Janice Long, Director