

ACCESS

Exciting programs for older adults
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Your Link To Community Resources

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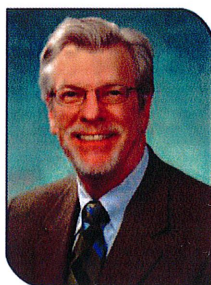
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Serving the counties of Livingston, Macomb, Monroe, Oakland, St.Clair and Washtenaw

AAA 1-B Honors Local Leaders For Dedication to Older Adults

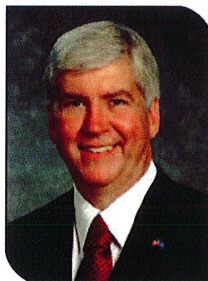
Each year, the Area Agency on Aging 1-B (AAA 1-B) selects leaders in their field who are going above and beyond to positively impact the quality of life for older adults and adults with disabilities in southeastern Michigan. On May 15, 2015, the following individuals were honored for their contributions at the AAA 1-B's Annual Community Meeting:



Tim Wintermute
Former Executive Director of the Luella Hannan Memorial Foundation
Sandra K. Reminga Lifetime Achievement Award

Tim Wintermute was presented with the Sandra K. Reminga Lifetime Achievement Award for his strong leadership of The Luella Hannan Memorial Foundation and his dedication throughout his career to increase access to affordable housing for low income seniors, particularly through his work in New York City and Washington, DC. He was instrumental in developing creative programs, such as the Hannan Center for Lifelong Learning and the Ellen Kayrod Gallery of Art, empowering older adults with engaging, educational

activities. Wintermute is a member of many national and local organizations and was a past chair of the Michigan Grantmakers in Aging, an affinity group of the Council of Michigan Foundations and Grantmakers in Aging.



Honorable Rick Snyder
Governor, State of Michigan
Public Service Leadership Award

Governor Snyder was awarded for his unprecedented leadership in addressing the challenges of an aging population and concern for the most vulnerable older adults in his State of the State Address and budget messages. He called for Michigan to become a no wait state for in-home services for

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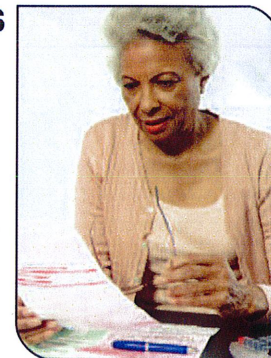
Screening Tool Helps Protect Vulnerable Seniors

According to a MetLife Mature Market Institute survey, Americans, age 65 and older suffered financial losses to a tune of \$2.9 billion dollars in 2010 due to financial fraud and scams. That equates to one in 20 older adults who became a victim of financial abuse and in a third of the cases the perpetrator was a friend, neighbor or family member.

Such was the case for Leo when his wife passed away last March and one of his sons moved in. Shortly thereafter, Leo placed his son on a joint bank account. Then the pair met with an attorney to sign quit claim deeds to four of Leo's properties. Over a five month period, more than \$100,000 disappeared from Leo's bank account. Fortunately, his other son who lived out of state realized that something was seriously wrong and contacted adult protective services (APS). Legal action ensued against the son who financially exploited his father.

Numerous studies conducted within the past five years have found that older adults are particularly vulnerable due to: a) a large net worth, b) cognitive impairments that affect decision making skills, and/or c) psychological vulnerability.

Advocates from the Area Agency on Aging 1-B (AAA 1-B) have been working diligently to combat this problem. According to AAA 1-B Director of Research, Policy Development and Advocacy Jim McGuire, "Advocates



were able to secure Governor Snyder's support for a package of elder abuse prevention bills that passed during the last legislative session."

In fact this spring, the Michigan Senate Judiciary Committee approved bills SB 49 and SB 50 that will make Michigan tougher on perpetrators by increasing fines and sentencing guidelines for crimes against older adults.

A few years ago, the AAA 1-B Advisory Council investigated how the issue of financial fraud and exploitation impacts vulnerable older adults. Chaired by Peter Lichtenberg, Ph.D., ABPP, director of the Institute of Gerontology, the Merrill Palmer Skillman Institute and founding director of Wayne State University's Lifespan Alliance, the ad hoc study resulted in a series of protective measures which included the first national study of fraud and the

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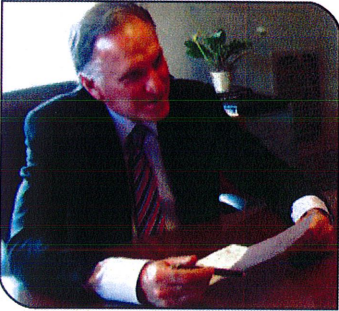
Screening Tool Helps Protect Vulnerable Seniors

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statewide "No Excuse for Elder Abuse" campaign.

Dr. Lichtenberg studied risk factors for fraud using a national sample which demonstrated that psychologically vulnerable older adults were at a 226% increased risk for fraud.

"It is critical that we have valid and reliable tools to adequately assess



Peter Lichtenberg, Ph.D., ABPP, director of the Institute of Gerontology, the Merrill Palmer Skillman Institute and founding director of Wayne State University's Lifespan Alliance.

specific financial decision-making abilities relevant to the individual at risk, especially for those that affect transactions which can result in significant losses or harmful consequences," said Dr. Lichtenberg.

His research inspired the Lichtenberg Financial Decision Screening Scale (LFDSS), a tool designed to screen an older adult's financial decision making abilities relative to a current or within six to twelve months of an upcoming financial decision or transaction. Professionals who work with older adults (i.e. physicians, attorneys, financial planners, bankers, etc.) would be trained to administer the five minute screening consisting of ten multiple choice questions.

To test out the scale, a pilot program is currently underway in the counties of Oakland, Calhoun, Kent, Otsego, Marquette, Kalamazoo and Ingham. Effectiveness will be measured by comparing scores and ratings on cases that were substantiated versus those that were not.

Once this phase of testing is complete, the next stage is focused on measures that can be taken to protect older adults who fail a screening. Would an advocate be assigned? Would the older adult have a period of time to retake the screening? Could the screening be used in a court of law? These are questions to be addressed before LFDSS becomes widely available.

If Leo's banker was able to administer the LFDSS before Leo added his son to the joint bank account, Leo would have been protected from the financial abuse that escalated beyond that point. When APS workers got involved they

NO EXCUSE
FOR Elder Abuse

1-855-444-3911

discovered that Leo had severe cognitive impairment.

"We are currently working on ways to make the scale accessible in a number of formats including a web-based LFDSS and mobile phone application," said Dr. Lichtenberg. "The response to this protective measure has been very positive so far." For more information about the LFDSS project, contact the office of Dr. Lichtenberg at 313-664-2633.

AAA 1-B Honors Local Leaders

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older adults and allocated five million dollars for in-home services in 2014. Governor Snyder is the first governor in the state to deliver a Special Message on Aging, calling upon all state departments to engage in activities that create a better environment in Michigan for older adults to age in place.

older adults have related to the end of driving. Through her informative news articles, Robin has helped educate thousands of older adults and family caregivers on programs and services available to improve their quality of life.



Robin Erb

Reporter, Detroit Free Press

Corporate/Business Leadership Award

Robin Erb was recognized for her excellent journalism and significant contributions that bring attention to important aging issues in the greater Detroit area. Robin joined the Detroit Free Press in 2007 to cover health and aging. In that time, she has examined a number of issues related to Michigan's changing demographics, providing outstanding coverage on the state's aging population and stresses on current infrastructure, Medicare and Medicaid, federal and state budget cuts to senior services, nursing homes, the crushing toll of Alzheimer's both on patients and caregivers and the challenging conversation families and



Sandie Pierce

Executive Director, Monroe Center for Healthy Aging

Service Provider Leadership Award

Sandie Pierce was chosen as the recipient of the Service Provider Leadership Award for her dedication and leadership of the Monroe Center for Healthy Aging. Under her guidance, the Center has flourished as a community hub and asset for the older adults in the Monroe area. Her dedication to the older adult community is demonstrated through her engagement on numerous committees, including serving as Coordinator of the Monroe County Human Services Collaborative, Chair of the Monroe Commission on Aging Director's Association, and Secretary of the Monroe Aging Consortium.

Don't Miss the Area Agency on Aging 1-B's Living Well Radio Series!

"Living Well" is a radio series that can be heard on our five radio partners. This informational feature provides tips, resources and important information to family caregivers, who are often struggling to balance caregiving with work, family and other obligations. "Living Well" sponsorship opportunities are available. Please contact Bill Hayes at 248-644-1990.



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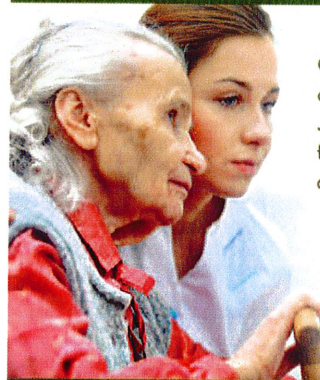
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