

## Buried Alive

by Sarah Lemnah, Director of Communications and Development



Each week millions of Americans gather around their televisions to watch TLC's "Hoarding-Buried Alive." There are interviews with frustrated family members and video of homes with clutter piled to the ceiling. People are fascinated to see the homes of hoarders who have collected items in mass proportion.

But beyond the sensationalized video with shocking displays of overflowing rooms are serious concerns. Burlington's Hoarding Task Force is comprised of several local agencies that work with individuals who have hoarding issues. Most hoarders either think they do not have a problem or are too embarrassed to ask for help. When hoarding gets out of control, renters can be evicted and homeowners can have their homes condemned.

Hoarding is classified as a mental disorder, a form of OCD (Obsessive Compulsive Disorder). A hoarder is not a collector in the sense of people who have collections of toys or baseball cards. Hoarders usually collect items with little to no value and have accumulated so much stuff that they become isolated and are unable to use their homes in the manner intended. Hoarders often can not cook because they can not access their appliances due to clutter or they can not shower due to clutter filling the bathroom.

Beyond the inconvenience of amassing large quantities of items, there are real dangers. According to Mark Schroeter of the Hoarding

Task Force, hoarding creates fire safety issues. When homes are constructed, they are designed to hold the weight of normal possessions such as furniture and carpet. But as hoarders collect more and more possessions, there is a "risk of



collapse" according to Schroeter. "In Vermont we have heard of fire departments that have had to cut holes in roofs to extricate people because clutter blocked the doors." Clutter in front of heating sources and stuff piled on extension cords have caused fires according to Schroeter. In addition to a fire hazard, hoarding can increase the risk of falls, infestation of insects and rodents, and mold and dust that can cause respiratory problems.

According to some studies, over 1.4 million Americans suffer from hoarding. Most start hoarding as children and it gets worse as they age. Hoarders have an inability to decide what is garbage and what they should keep. They become anxious about the thought of getting rid of any of their possessions and do not want others to touch their things. The most common

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## The CVAA Voice is Launched

by Sarah Lemnah

The CVAA Voice, formerly the Elders Advocate, is produced by CVAA as a resource for seniors, their families and caregivers. Since 1974, CVAA has worked to empower seniors to live well! CVAA works with seniors and caregivers offering guidance and providing the support and services they need when they need them. Each year, CVAA serves over 10,000 seniors in the Champlain Valley.

The CVAA Voice has a new look and a new name but continues to be a valuable resource in the senior community. This newspaper is designed to offer objective, unbiased information to help seniors make informed choices.

CVAA is the resource on senior issues. Whether it is questions about Medicare, housing, 3SquaresVT, fuel assistance, Choices for Care, transportation or so much more, the CVAA Senior HelpLine at 1-800-642-5119 can answer your questions. CVAA recently launched its new website at [www.cvaa.org](http://www.cvaa.org), offering information and resources 24 hours a day.

Each year, CVAA answers over 10,000 calls on the Senior HelpLine, assists over 5,000 seniors with their Medicare questions, and delivers over 220,000 Meals on Wheels in the Champlain Valley. In addition, CVAA Case Managers help over 2600 seniors access services and benefits that they are eligible for, including arranging for at-home care.

The CVAA Voice gives a voice to senior issues!

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# CVAA VOICE

CVAA Voice Editor: Sarah Lemnah  
Typesetting and Layout: CVAA

The CVAA Voice is published as a newsletter of CVAA. CVAA is a non-profit organization serving seniors in Addison, Chittenden, Franklin, and Grand Isle counties in Vermont.

CVAA Voice  
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Essex Junction VT 05452  
802 865 0360

senior helpline  
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For information, physical and alternative access, as well as getting the CVAA Voice, contact John Barbour at 802 865 0360 or 1 800 642 5119. (voice/TTY)

CVAA is a United Way Agency.



## Health Care Reform & Medicare

by Patricia Selsky, SHIP Coordinator



So how does Health Care Reform affect Medicare? Substantial progress has been made to reduce Medicare Part D prescription costs.

- In 2010, if you reach the coverage gap, you will receive a one-time rebate check of \$250 (individuals receiving Medicare Extra Help are not eligible).
- In 2011, you will receive a 50% discount on brand name drugs in the coverage gap.
- Over the next 10 years, you will receive additional savings until the coverage gap (doughnut hole) is closed.

Your guaranteed Medicare benefits will remain the same. Beginning next year, preventative services such as an annual physical, colorectal cancer screening and mammograms will be free to Medicare beneficiaries.

Medicare Advantage Open Enrollment Period (OEP) has been changed this year. In the past, Medicare Advantage Plans had an OEP from January – March.

This will no longer be the case. During that time, you will only be allowed to leave your Medicare Advantage Plan for original Medicare. If you want to change to another Medicare Advantage Plan, the time to change plans is November 15 – December 31, 2010.

For more details, refer to your 2011 Medicare and You Handbook or call SHIP at 1-800-642-5119.



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## Medicare's Annual Enrollment Period

by Patricia Selsky, SHIP Coordinator

It's time again to review your health care insurance for next year. CVAA State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) counselors are busy preparing for Medicare's Annual Enrollment Period (AEP), November 15 - December 31, 2010. For people with Medicare, this is your opportunity to review, change or enroll in prescription drug coverage. New this year, it is also the time for people with Medicare Advantage Plans to change plans if desired.

By October 31 of this year, all people with Medicare Part D should have received their Annual Notice of Change (ANOC). This notice provides information from your Part D plan regarding their formulary (list of covered drugs), benefit design and/or premium changes for 2011.

Although the process of comparing plans can be challenging, it is essential to re-evaluate your insurance coverage for next year. Here are some questions to ask:

- 1) What are my plan's monthly premium and prescription costs?
- 2) Does my plan cover all of my medications?
- 3) Are there any restrictions on my medications? If so, what are they?
- 4) Will I enter the coverage gap (doughnut hole) next year?
- 5) How will my federal or state program (Low Income Subsidy or VPharm) coordinate with my plan in 2011?

Given the many intricacies of plans, state and federal programs and the increasing number of coverage options, it is important that consumers look closely at the details. The new plan information will be available by late October at [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov) or in your 2011 Medicare & You Handbook. Also, CVAA SHIP counselors are available to provide free health insurance counseling for anyone with Medicare.

As the AEP approaches, the SHIP counselors at CVAA are ready to help you understand your choices for 2011. You can reach us by calling the Senior HelpLine at 1-800-642-5119.



## Move it or Lose It: Sarcopenia

by Kathy Backes, MPH, Registered Dietitian for CVAA



Have you passed a neighbor lately and asked, "Where are you off to?" only to hear "nowhere particular- just walking around to get some exercise?"

And for good reason. Around age forty, many of us lose nearly half a pound of muscle each year and gain the same amount of fat. This transformation increases in rate as we continue to age-- until, by age eighty, we have only a third of the muscle we had at forty. This process is called sarcopenia, or thinning muscle mass. To understand this, try this analogy: sarcopenia is to muscle as osteoporosis is to bone. Both relate to aging and tissue thinning and weakening.

The relationship of these two major tissues (bone and muscle) in our bodies goes even further. In fact, says Edward S. Leib, MD, Director of the Osteoporosis Center at Fletcher Allen Medical Center in Vermont, "research shows muscle mass relates to bone mass. In fact, what form the weight is in has just as much importance as what your weight is. Body weight in the form of muscle mass stimulates bone, which is needed and helps keep bone healthy."

The good news is, like with osteoporosis, there are lifestyle changes that you have control of that can reduce or delay the process of sarcopenia. With sarcopenia, you can even reverse the process. This could mean more strength to do what you want to do independently, increased metabolism which can mean you can eat more without gaining weight, and more muscle and less fat. All this can improve the way you carry yourself and improve your stability, appearance and confidence. So what are the magical things that you can do to get these rewards? Add some strength training and good nutrition.

With exercise, start with a small realistic plan that works for you, but start! Most people begin to see some results in only two weeks, but experts say to give it at least four weeks' commitment for bigger changes. Then continue. Within two months, many people double the amount they can lift. And "Girls and Boys," dress and trousers

sizes can even drop from the toning! Don't forget your bones are enjoying this and getting stronger too.

Begin with a check-in to your general practitioner for the go-ahead to do some exercising. Then get in touch with your local recreation department or senior center to see what exercise programs they offer. The programs can range from participative video-type program like Wii or seated exercise programs to more advanced programs.

Next check your diet. Are there any areas to tweak a little to balance it out? Healthy eating will give your body and mind the energy and alertness to be more active. Most of you are familiar with the Food Pyramid. This nutrition guide summarizes some basic healthy eating rules. You might want to visit the web site: [www.mypyramid.gov](http://www.mypyramid.gov) to personalize the plan more.

For folks over 50, there are a few key nutrients that often come up short in their diet. These are: calcium, potassium, fiber (soluble and insoluble), magnesium, and vitamins A, C, D, and E. There are two quick ways to find out if you are eating enough of these. If you are following the Food Pyramid, you will get all the nutrients you need. The other way is to read your food labels. Food is your best source for nutrition since it contains a whole package of nutrients that work together to increase the effects in the body.

As we age, our taste buds change and our sense of thirst lowers. Because of this, it is important to add variety, color and texture to your food choices and be sure to get 64 ounces of fluid each day. If this sounds a little overwhelming, remember fluid comes in many forms. This can be in the form of water, decaf beverages (moderate consumption of caffeinated beverages counts, but less), fruit juices and popsicles, fruits, vegetables, soups, yogurts, milks, and puddings. Most fruits and vegetables provide about  $\frac{1}{3}$  to  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup fluid per cup. The only food groups that do not usually provide much fluid are the protein and the grain groups.

Our bodies need about a quarter of a pound of

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## IT TAKES A TEAM TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE



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## Put on Your Oxygen Mask First

by Karen Gissendanner, CVAA Case Manager



When the eight individuals walked into the room at CVAA that first day, they were strangers with seemingly little in common.

They were male and female, young and old, from different parts of town, and a variety of jobs and backgrounds. They all knew, however, that they shared one common, deep bond. Each person in the room was a caregiver for a chronically ill family member. Each of them devotes a great deal of time and expends mental and physical energy caring for a loved one. This was the tie that bound them together.

This unsung group of people had come to

CVAA to take a six-week course called “Powerful Tools For Caregivers” (PTC). PTC is not designed to be a support group. PTC is a caregiver educational series that teaches its participants new coping skills and strategies for the difficult work they do.



Whether caring for a spouse, a parent, a sibling or a friend, caregivers face very similar challenges. The goal of PTC is for the caregiver to come away with renewed strength and tangible ways to manage the stress of caregiving.

When you board an airplane, the flight attendant gives safety instructions. One of them

is “if oxygen masks drop down, put on your oxygen mask first before helping others.” This is because, if you don’t take care of yourself first, you may not be able to help those who need your help. This principle applies to caregiving as well. When you take care of yourself, everyone benefits.

It would be impossible to sum up this dynamic six-week course in one short article. However, some of the things one can expect to learn in this course are:

- Let go of what cannot be changed.
- Seek and accept support.
- Identify unrealistic expectations, especially your own.
- Identify what you still have rather than focus on what you have lost.
- Practice self-care and positive self-talk.
- Communicate more effectively.

Identifying and reducing personal stress can help eliminate the threat of the caregiver becoming the second victim of whatever illness is affecting the care recipient. Too often we see caregivers who have sacrificed their own health to care for another.

If you find yourself in a caregiving role and feel that you could use some better coping techniques, consider enrolling in a “Powerful Tools For Caregivers” class. It will prove to be an invaluable investment in your own mental and physical well being. Call CVAA at 1-800-642-5119 to inquire when a class may be coming to your area.

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## Clues That Help is Needed

by Robyn Young



Barbara's mother called in a panic. The electric company had shut off her power. Barbara called the company and learned that her elderly mother had not paid her bills in several months. Barbara made an emergency trip to her mother's to sort out her affairs. She learned that other utilities had not been paid and last year's tax returns had not been filed. Barbara, who lives in another state, was unaware that her mother's ability to manage her finances had deteriorated.

Some elders reach a point where they need help managing their financial affairs. Fearing the loss of their independence and an invasion of privacy, many do not ask for help. Left unnoticed and unattended, however, financial problems can develop and quickly spiral out of control.

Here are some clues to watch for that may indicate that Mom and Dad need help.

### Listen to what your parents say.

Repeated statements that they do not receive any mail, including income checks and bank statements, need to be investigated. While your parents could be victims of fraud, such assertions could also indicate that Mom's or Dad's cognitive abilities are declining.

Talk of unusual or large expenses, new expensive hobbies, or "can't fail" investments could also signal problems. While everyone has a right to purchase what they need and want, such purchases could indicate a problem if they are more than what your parents can afford or are out of character. If Dad never had any interest in fishing and is suddenly buying expensive gear

and planning an Alaskan fishing trip, he could be having difficulty managing his finances.

### Visit your parents at their house.

Look at the state of the mail. Piles of mail scattered around the house or mail in unusual places - such as stuffed into books or in kitchen drawers - could mean that Dad is not paying attention to his financial affairs. Take some time to flip through the mail. Undeposited checks and unopened bills, statements and letters are all warning signs. If an unopened letter looks official, ask Dad's permission to open it. While it could be junk, it could also be a notice from a collection agency.

Ask permission to look at Mom's checkbook register. Repeated or missing check numbers, incorrect balances, and missing deposits are all clues that she may no longer be able to keep track of her cash flow. Other signs of trouble include a lack of regular payments to utility companies and checks repeatedly written to individuals and organizations that you don't recognize. If you are unfamiliar with the payee, ask Mom what the payment is for. You will want to find out whether someone is taking advantage of her.

### Look at how your parents are managing physically.

If her arthritic hands make it difficult to write or her eyesight is failing, Mom may no longer be physically able to pay her bills and keep up her checkbook. If Dad can no longer drive or has difficulty walking, how does he get to the bank?

What can you do if you believe your parents need help managing their finances? Begin with

communication. Express your concerns and why you have them. It is important to remember that many people do not like to discuss their money with others, especially their children. Respect that your parents are adults. Your goal is to help them be as independent as possible, not to take control of their money. Legally, you cannot force your parents to do anything unless they are found incompetent by a court of law.

If you firmly believe that your parents need help and they refuse, seek the support of a professional. Sometimes people will respond if their physician, attorney, accountant, or investment advisor, whom they know and trust, tells them to accept help. Geriatric care managers can evaluate Mom and Dad's situation and determine what type of assistance they need.

Even if your parents currently do not need help, talk with them now to decide how their finances will be handled should they ever need assistance.

Talking to parents about their money is difficult for most people. It is essential for children to intervene, however, when their parents are losing the ability to manage their finances. By paying attention to clues, you will know when it's time to step in.

*Robyn Young is owner of Money Care, LLC, a daily money management service in Williston, Vermont. She can be reached at [www.moneycarevt.com](http://www.moneycarevt.com) or telephone 802-343-0389.*

\* The names of the individuals in this article have been changed to protect their privacy.

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## Local Seniors to Receive Blizzard Bags

by Sarah Lemnah, Director of Communications and Development

Nearly 900 seniors in the Champlain Valley will soon be receiving Blizzard Bags from CVAA to help them make it through the winter. Each year, CVAA delivers Blizzard Bags to seniors receiving Meals on Wheels. Each Blizzard Bag contains 3 shelf-stable meals for seniors to have in the home to use when daily Meals on Wheels delivery is canceled.

According to Zoe Hardy, CVAA Nutrition Director, "We provide these Blizzard Bags for two reasons: to provide food for



clients who may not be able to access food due to bad weather conditions and to allow us to cancel delivery of meals on really bad weather days as we are just as concerned about our volunteers' safety." CVAA staff and volunteers will deliver Blizzard Bags in Addison, Chittenden, Franklin and Grand Isle counties the last week of November.

The challenging economy has had an impact on Vermont seniors and the agencies that serve them. CVAA's Meals on Wheels program has seen the demand for Meals on Wheels increase as the cost of food has risen. Many seniors rely on CVAA's Meals on Wheels to provide hot



nutritious meals that can help them maintain their independence and health in their own homes. Last year alone, over 220,000 Meals on Wheels

were delivered to seniors in the Champlain Valley. Hundreds of CVAA volunteers deliver meals each day to seniors in every community, no matter how remote.

According to Hardy, she has "known a volunteer to trudge through knee deep snow to bring a meal. Blizzard Bags alleviate some of our worries about the most isolated seniors we serve." Blizzard Bags contain food that is easy to

prepare, is shelf-stable, and provides the protein and nutrition seniors need. Blizzard Bags are just one more way that CVAA works to make sure that no senior goes hungry in the Champlain Valley.

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**Leunig's Chef Named Top Chef of the Champlain Valley at CVAA's Benefit to Support Meals on Wheels**

by Sarah Lemnah, Director of Communications and Development

Donnell Collins, Executive Chef and co-owner of Leunig's Bistro and Cafe in Burlington, was named Top Chef of the Champlain Valley at CVAA's benefit to support Meals on Wheels.



Donnell Collins (center) and her sous chefs from the 2010 Top Chef - photo taken by Alison Redlich.

Collins went head to head against Sam Palmisano of Pulcinella's (2008 & 2009 Top Chef winner) and David Fonte of 156 Bistro. The winning dish was a cornmeal-crust quail with cherry sauce.

The 4th annual Top Chef of the Champlain Valley, an Iron Chef Experience, raised nearly \$30,000 to support CVAA's Meals on Wheels and



Sam Palmisano, 2008 & 2009 Top Chef Winner works on his dish- photo taken by Alison Redlich.

Case Management programs. Over 400 people packed the Maple Ballroom at UVM's Davis Center to watch Collins be named the new Top Chef. Live music by Trinity and tastings hosted by Lake Champlain Chocolates, Cabot Cheese, Shelburne Vineyards, Switchback Brewery and Woodchuck Draft Cider showcased Vermont talent at the culinary event of the year.

Over 40 local farms and restaurants supported the Top Chef by providing local food for the chefs to use in the competition and producing gourmet appetizers for those attending the event. According to Annie Harlow, a local farm-based food consultant for the Top Chef, "We have an opportunity to share with chefs and patrons the fine food of Vermont, offering up distinct flavors."



Winning Dish photo taken by Alison Redlich.

Restaurants and catering companies offered up an array of hors d'oeuvres, creating their own competition for who was the best chef.

Emcees Sean Buchanan of Vermont Public Television's "Feast in the Making" and Charlie Papillo of WVMT counted down the 50 minutes that the chefs had to create a gourmet appetizer and entrée for the judges, using only two induction burners. The panel of judges included Mark Timms, Executive Chef of the TopNotch Resort & Spa in Stowe, Suzanne Podhaizer, food critic for Seven Days, and Tim Elliott, Executive Chef and Owner of Stone Soup in Burlington. As the winning chef was announced, Elliott proclaimed that anyone ordering this dish in a restaurant "would be thrilled."

Donnell Collins will defend her title at Top Chef 5 in August 2011.



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## Putting Cookies Back in the Jar

by Beverly Hill, Volunteer Coordinator



Bob Qua provides companionship to seniors in St. Albans through one-on-one visits as a CVAA Friendly Visitor volunteer. He read an article about the program and decided to try it three years ago. Since then,

he's volunteered with two different seniors: one senior man he visited until that senior moved and Sylvia who he's been helping for over two years.

In both cases, Qua offered these seniors the opportunity to get out in the community. The first senior spent most of his time in his apartment with his cat. As Qua put it, he had "no place to go and nothing to do, so he really looked forward to at least once a week, he got out with people and that was his thing." The senior enjoyed talking with new people, so he didn't hesitate to introduce himself to whoever they encountered. He and Qua had a lot of fun together until the senior moved.

Now Qua takes Sylvia grocery shopping each week and they go out to eat together either before or after the shopping trip. Sylvia also has a cat and Qua is not one of the cat's friends. Sometimes, he comments on the cat and Sylvia is quick to defend him, saying "you leave him alone. Don't mess with my boy." The teasing banter is part of the rapport they've established and they both enjoy. In spite of his opinion of her cat, Sylvia says Qua is "a fine fellow and he will do anything for you."

Qua credits his first civilian boss with the philosophy that guides his volunteer work in the community. After college and a stint in the Navy, Qua went to work in the financial service industry. He noticed his boss not only worked hard and was extremely successful, but also seemed to be involved in everything – church, charities, whatever – always doing something. Qua asked him where he got the time for that and he replied "You don't get time. You make the time." Qua asked "Why are you doing all this?" His boss replied, "You can't go through life taking cookies out of the jar. At some point in time, you gotta put the cookies back in." That thought stuck in Qua's head.

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## Not Just Another Fish Tale

by Leta Ferola Watkins, CVAA Senior Companion Coordinator



Most fish tales are about the big fish that got away, but this is a story about how two complete strangers took the risk to get to know each other and ultimately to trust in a friendship. George is one of CVAA's Senior Companions and the guy that predictably goes above and beyond for each of his "clients."

The first time I visited George at his farm in New Haven, one hot August day, he told me this story about a 92-year-old man with whom he was working. Cliff is a native Vermonter who had recently lost his wife. George met him during the winter of 2010 when Cliff's CVAA Case Manager, Nicole VanBuren asked George to take Cliff fishing in the spring.

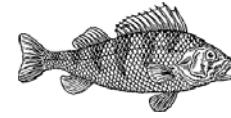
This might be a tall task for most people to achieve, considering that Cliff used a walker to move about and hadn't even left his trailer in six months, not to mention that he was feeling downright sad. But George could see that, although Cliff was doubtful this could work, he had a fierce desire to fish just once more because fishing had been his lifelong passion.

Cliff wondered who the heck this George guy was. And what was a Senior Companion? Did he have a car and time to actually take him fishing? Fortunately, commonalities unfolded between these two men and they began planning their first fishing trip. George dug worms from his horse manure pile and brush-hogged a path down to the New Haven River's edge by his house.

Well, the day to fish soon arrived and Cliff asked George if he had gotten his fishing license. Although George had not, Cliff proudly boasted he still had his - a Vermont Lifetime License that cost him \$3.75 back in the day. Cliff insisted George get licensed. Thus, their first fishing trip did not start well and was aborted. Older man vs. younger man - Cliff was one up on George and they hadn't even started to fish!

George worked even harder the next time to pull it all off, even snagging fishing magazines and The State of Vermont Fishing Rulebook.

When they finally did make it to the fishing



hole, George made his first cast. Cliff inquired, "Is that the farthest you can throw the thing?" George was acutely aware that his fishing prowess was being judged. After about 20 more unproductive casts, Cliff stated rather roughly that there never was any fish here anyway and this day was just too dang raw and cold.

It was decided they would fish next at Pantown Bay, an inlet to Lake Champlain on The Basin Harbor Club Road. The men made extensive plans with every minute detail worked out. George came prepared with Vermont-grown worms of commercial grade, but Cliff came with Canadian Night Crawlers, big as snakes and at least the size of a man's thumb! The dam was vacant of people, the sun was on the rise, and the sky was spitting sugar snow. The downgrade to the dam was rather deep but Cliff rushed down anyway, adrenaline coursing through his veins and feeling the freedom after being cooped up in

*continued on page 9*

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## Not Just Another Fish Tale

*continued from page 8*



his trailer the last 3 weeks. After casting several times with no bites and the bitter cold settling in on them, they headed home, dreams of fish eluding them.

Fishing Trip Three, back to Pantown Bay: George took out his worms, baited Cliff's hook, and cast out. Soon he shouted excitedly for Cliff to reel her in. He was sure he saw something take the hook but it was only seaweed and the worm was gone. George cast for Cliff a second time, and again no worm on the hook. After George's third failed attempt, Cliff inquired, "Are you sure you're baiting it right? How'd you expect a man to fish without any bait on his hook, boy?"

Here in lay a breakthrough of sorts. George had been just a ride and a driver up until then, taking up time and space. George's Vermont grown worms had been inadequate and even his prep work had failed; he hadn't secured Cliff's fishing box to the walker properly and the tackle box spilled open scattering gear everywhere. But Cliff surely saw how hard his new friend tried.



Cliff and George waiting for the "big one" to bite.

"Give me that hook and I'll worm it with my own night crawlers. If a man can't bait his own hook! I was baiting these before you were even born!"

The old fisherman

proceeded to hook the worm and prick his fingers in the doing. A trickle of blood spills onto his fingers and a revelation strikes George then: Cliff intensely wanted to catch a fish!

Cliff then cast his own line, immediately hauling in a 10-inch bass.

A 12-year-old kid with a bicycle walked down the hill towards them, carrying a fancy rod and reel.

Now three generations were fishing the dam, and a perfect opportunity arose. George had the kid take a photo to capture the fishing trip

memory. Cliff was obviously quite taken with the youth's skill in flicking his wrist in the casting, much like Cliff did years earlier. Soon, the lad headed home and, as they pass him on the road, the youngster waves to Cliff who waves back gladly. These people might never see each other again, but all three are happier for their mutual fishing experience.

Recently, I met Cliff in his Bristol home. I asked about George, his Senior Companion. "He sticks on me like a wart," says Cliff, obviously using these words to show affection and trust. George puts it well, "With just a little kindness, attention, patience, courtesy and understanding, senior citizens can remain independent in the community."

CVAA has seven Senior Companions visiting approximately 65 elders in their homes. The program is valuable because it encourages a better quality of life and a wider social network for both the "client" and their Senior Companion.

### Do you want to join the Senior Companion Team?

#### Job Qualifications:

- Age 55 and over
- Background/Reference checks
- In Good Health
- Access to Transportation
- Household Income Less than family units of: Family of 1 = \$21,660  
Family of 2 = \$29,140
- Desire to Help Others

#### Job Benefits:

- Mileage Reimbursement
- Tax Free Stipend of \$2.65/hour
- Resources/Training/Support
- Vacation/Holiday/Sick Time

**For more information,  
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## Put More Healthy Food on Your Table with 3SquaresVT

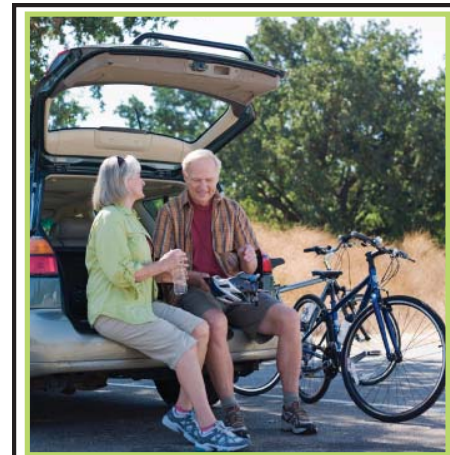
For a senior citizen, good nutrition is extremely important. It helps you stay active and independent and helps prevent sickness. The high costs of food, fuel and health care are making it hard for many elders to put good food on the table. 3SquaresVT can help.



3SquaresVT helps you stretch your food budget and put three square meals a day on your table. It comes as a monthly dollar benefit either on a debit-like card called an EBT card or as cash directly deposited into your bank account. In addition to many stores, 3SquaresVT is now accepted at many farmers markets.

As a program of the US Department of Agriculture, 3SquaresVT was created to support local businesses and farmers. Elders who take part are not taking money away from others in need. Congress made it an entitlement program

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## Neighbor to Neighbor AmeriCorps

by Beverly Hill, Volunteer Coordinator

Neighbor to Neighbor (N2N) AmeriCorps members join CVAA staff each fall and spend 11 months providing direct service to seniors, administering our volunteer program, and presenting Healthy Aging Programs. We'd like to introduce the new N2N team to you.



Heather Bell

Heather Bell joined N2N because she wanted to make a positive difference in the local community. She enjoys working with others and looks forward "to the new experiences N2N has to offer." She will work in Grand Isle County, Milton, and Colchester. Heather graduated from UVM with a degree in Anthropology and Sociology after completing an internship at CVAA. In college, she specifically focused on archaeology and worked on archaeological digs in Vermont and in Arizona where she attended a field school excavating a Pueblo site.



Michael Bortin

Michael Bortin moved from Wisconsin to Burlington to join N2N at CVAA. He sees N2N as a way to put all his energy into making sure seniors' health, happiness, and quality of life are fulfilled. He is excited to work "with a motivated group of individuals in a team environment who share the same values and goals." He will work in southern Chittenden County. Michael is interested in current events and believes the news helps put his life in perspective. During his college years, he lived in a French-speaking residence and he loves the French culture.



Colin Hunt

Colin Hunt wanted a job that allowed him to work in the field and gain experience in Gerontology, an area that interests him. He is looking forward to rewarding work coordinating volunteers and working in the field. He enjoys meeting new people and feels "that is one of the benefits of doing service through Neighbor to Neighbor." He will be working in part of Chittenden County. Colin is an ADK 46er – someone who has climbed all 46 Adirondack Peaks. He enjoys outdoor

activities of all kinds and, above all, loves to hike mountains.



Jennifer Manosh

Jennifer Manosh became interested in working with seniors while in college and worked at a senior center for her Senior Practicum. She looks forward to exciting challenges and training opportunities, working with other compassionate members, and building versatile skills. She will be working in Addison County. Jennifer's bachelor degree is in Health Science and Nutrition. After graduation, she worked in the Nutrition Department at FAHC and completed an Editorial Internship at Eating Well Media Group where she assisted in editing material for Eating Well Magazine.



Jack Quint

Jack Quint "had a great time organizing programs and individuals in Franklin County" last year and decided to come back for a second term of service with N2N. He will work on expanding his knowledge of the same territory and keeping some of the great connections he's made. He anticipates challenges in organizing programs – both new programs and some from last year - in parts of Franklin County where he has spent less time. By night, Jack is a vocal part of Burlington's arts community – as a pirate in Lyric Theatre's fall production of Peter Pan and as front runner of the local rock n' roll cover band Sneezeguard.

We look forward to seeing what our new team of N2N AmeriCorps members will accomplish during their term of service.

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## 3SquaresVT

continued from page 9

to assure there would be benefits for everyone. Just like Social Security, 3SquaresVT is a benefit you are entitled to if eligible – there is no reason not to apply. Spending benefits in Vermont adds federal dollars to the state's economy.

There is no gross income limit for elders 60 and over to be eligible. Elders with gross incomes below 185% of federal poverty levels do not have a resource limit. The 185% income limit is \$1,671 for a single person or \$2,248 for a couple. If your income is over these numbers, you may still be eligible but have a resource limit instead. But remember, your retirement savings do not count as resources.

Many Vermonters are facing challenges right now. You are not alone. Everyone needs access to healthy food and 3SquaresVT is here to help. One in seven Vermonters participate, including thousands of senior citizens. As an elder, you've worked hard all your life and you have earned the help you need.

For more information or an application, visit [www.vermontfoodhelp.com](http://www.vermontfoodhelp.com) or call the Senior HelpLine at 1-800-642-5119.

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## Senior HelpLine: Information and Assistance

by Joanna Berk, Paula Gallo, Jennifer MacLellan, and Joel Gluck, Senior Helpline Coordinators



### Q: Are there any services available to help prevent caregiver burnout?

A: There are many services and programs available to provide respite to caregivers. It is important for caregivers to take care of themselves in order to take better care of their loved ones. Here are some examples:

- CVAA offers a Dementia Respite Grant available to caregivers of people with dementia. Funds from this grant can help pay for adult day programs, personal care, supervision, or other respite services.

- Adult Day facilities offer safe, structured programs for people who need supervision and care during the day. Adult Day Programs provide meals and activities and help with personal care such as bathing.

- There are many private agencies and private caregivers who can be hired to come into the home to provide care and supervision so the caregiver can have a break. Caregivers might also want to consider asking friends, family, and community groups such as churches or clubs for assistance.

- Some residential care facilities offer temporary overnight respite care stays.

It is also important for caregivers to take care of their own mental and emotional health. There are support groups available for caregivers to

share their experiences and get support from one another.

CVAA also offers a class called Powerful Tools for Caregivers, a six-week course designed to help family caregivers take care of themselves while caring for a relative or friend. Please see "Put on Your Oxygen Mask First" on page 4 for more information on this program.

For more specific information on any of the services mentioned in this article, please contact the Senior HelpLine at 1-800-642-5119 or e-mail [info@cva.org](mailto:info@cva.org).

### Move it or Lose it

*continued from page 3*

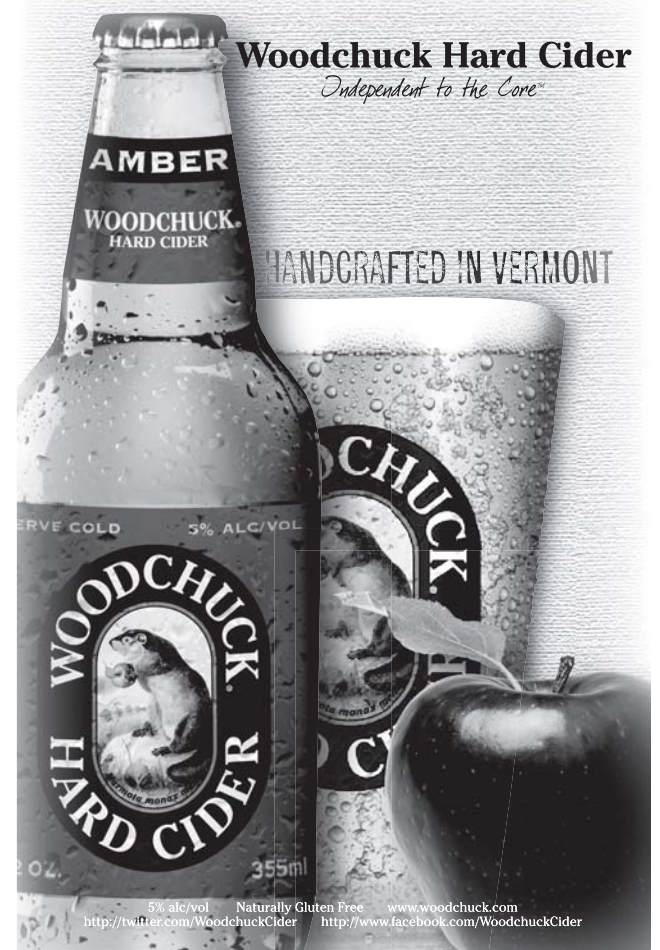
protein daily from food. Most folks get enough protein in their diet. But when it comes to those of us age 55 and over, about a quarter do not get enough. You can get protein from a variety of plant and animal sources.



What about foods found in the grain group (aka the bread and cereal group) of the Pyramid? Make as many

as possible of your choices whole grains to maximize satiety and nutrition.

Since I assume that you are sitting while you are reading this, let's wrap up so you can get moving safely, gently, and enjoyably. One last thing--while moving around check your cupboards and refrigerator to see what foods you might need to add to your grocery list. For more information call the Senior HelpLine at 1-800-642-5119.



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## Volunteer

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Qua and his family moved to St. Albans from Connecticut five years ago, after spending summers at their vacation home in Alburgh. Now he works out of his home. With no commute, no travel, and no new clients to visit, he has chosen to use his time and talents to benefit the greater community. About three years ago, he became a volunteer driver for the American Cancer Society Road to Recovery program which provides transportation to and from treatment for people who have cancer and need a ride. Qua transports patients from Franklin County to treatment in either St. Albans or Burlington.

Qua also took up bass fishing in a big way, which led him to develop a relationship with Lake Champlain International (LCI) and James Ehlers. Qua's involvement has ranged from monitoring fishery meetings to writing letters of support for grant applications to appearing in a documentary that UVM is filming on the condition of the lake. He has taken a lead role in planning the Vermont Bass Federation Nation Eastern Region Divisional tournament scheduled for September 2011 in Malletts Bay.

Qua is just one of many CVAA Friendly Visitors helping seniors one at a time in the Champlain Valley. If you'd like to help one senior in your community, call 1-800-642-5119. As Qua says, "Well, you know, I can kinda come and go as I please now. So it's time to put some cookies back in the jar." Please consider joining him and putting cookies back in the jar with him.

## Hoarding

continued from page 1

things collected are newspapers and junk mail. Hoarders often rationalize that they can not throw something out either because they will need it later or that it has sentimental value. Schroeter explains a person may have crutches in their home because their "Uncle Charlie used them in 1954 and Uncle Charlie was great to me so I can not get rid of them."

For family members and professionals, working with hoarders can be frustrating. Derek Souza, a former AmeriCorps member for CVAA, worked with a number of seniors who were dealing with de-cluttering their homes in some severe hoarding cases. "The first thing I had to do was gain their trust. They are deeply attached to their possessions," stated Souza. "One senior agreed to de-clutter to appease the housing authority and because her family wasn't coming over and she wasn't seeing her grandchildren due to the clutter."

Souza worked with seniors who "were not cooking or showering due to clutter." He knew that de-cluttering was a process. Some days they just talked and did no work and other days small battles were won. It took a week to whittle down the 10 phone books to 1, having formed a compromise where all of the phone numbers were written into one book. Small successes led to more successes. Souza remembered one senior he worked with who "was able to shower after we cleaned out the bathroom. It hadn't been used in five years."

Professionals can help hoarders learn to adopt new habits. They can help hoarders understand

that the clutter is impacting their goals. If their goal is to spend more time with their grandchildren, professionals can help them see how the clutter is impacting that goal and help establish a plan to meet their goal. For more information about resources available for hoarders, call the Senior HelpLine at 1-800-642-5119.



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