

VIRTUAL EDUCATIONAL SESSIONS FROM MOORHEAD

<http://www.thefmextra.com/age-well-video-network-brings-new-programming-to-senior-centers/>

Age Well video network brings new programming to senior centers

By admin | Posted August 1st, 2019 | 



Trudy Latozke and Emily Friedrich of Eventide Senior Living are coordinating an interactive video network to bring educational programming to senior citizens around Clay County. They're working with (seated, from left) Peggy Chisolm of REACH, Hawley; Danica Robison, Dancing Sky Agency Area on Aging; and Julie Marxen, Moorhead senior services director. Other participants represent the Barnesville and Ulen senior centers and Ulen Lutheran Church. Photo/Russ Hanson.

Nancy Edmonds Hanson

hanssonnanc@gmail.com

"Not all senior citizens want to only play Bingo and cards," says Trudy Latozke. With the help of a grant from Leading Age Minnesota, the Eventide Foundation director has pulled together a network to bring useful and entertaining live video programs to senior centers across Clay County.

Moorhead residents already have easy access to a range of useful presentations through Senior Connections at the Hjemkomst Center, Trudy points out. That's not necessarily true for seniors who live farther out in the county. "They may not have access to transportation and opportunities to attend programs that might interest them," she says.

The collaboration called Clay County Age Well is about to change that. Starting with a launch party on Tuesday, Aug. 13, interactive video sessions will take place from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. in four locations: Ulen Senior Center, Rollage Lutheran Church, REACH Hawley and the Hjemkomst Center. Originating in Ulen, the broadcast features Fertile, Minnesota, garden expert Eric Bergeson. Lunch will be provided while attendees become familiar with the new technology. (The Barnesville Senior Center is also part of the Age Well network, but its facility was not available for this first event.)

The gardening program is just the first of what Trudy and Eventide intern Emily Friedrich envision as a varied and helpful two-way street. Its goal, Emily explains, is "to break down the silos of each individual senior-services agency and bring them together in a circle."

Eventide was invited by Leading Age to submit a proposal for ways to connect seniors and their families to community resources so that they can continue to age well in their own communities. Four grant applicants were eventually selected – the local "silos to circles" project that has evolved into the Clay County Age Well Initiative, plus others in Perham, Chisago and Crosby.

Other recipients of the \$150,000 awards focused on adding staff, Trudy reports. The local direction is different. "We surveyed groups that work with older adults on what's already working well in Clay County and what they felt was lacking," she says. After discussions in each community, they turned up a list of concerns, from lack of transportation to a desire for more local educational events and physical activities. "They said they feel like they have to travel to Moorhead all the time for these things," she adds. Several also mentioned the need for options to get newly retired people involved with their senior centers: "Not everyone is interested in Bingo and playing cards. They said they need to diversify their programming to bring more people in."

Trudy and Emily – a University of Minnesota graduate student in health care administration – invited representatives of agencies serving the older population to work together to develop a solution. They came up with an approach that brings people together through video conferencing – a so-called

came up with an approach that brings people together through video conferencing – a so-called “cloud-based meeting space” connecting a speaker in one location with audiences in five other settings.

The Pinnacle video-conference system not only distributes the speaker’s presentation via the internet, much like closed-circuit TV. It also allows him or her to make contact with audiences, who can see, hear and ask questions as if they were in the same room. Each of six “hub” locations is equipped with a video camera, monitors and the devices needed to connect with broadband to send and receive. Moorhead’s Senior Connections is expected to generate much of the programming, at least at first. While Bergeson will be in Ulen for the launch party, most speakers will be presenting at the Hjemkomst Center. Each of the sites has the same ability to share its programs, along with Eventide itself.

While the technology may seem intimidating at first, Emily says it is being set up for easy control by the volunteers who will operate it. She plans to conduct training over coming days with leaders at each site. “The systems are pre-programmed and just take a couple of clicks. Pressing one button on the remote control connects you with the cloud. People are eager to see how it works.”

The schedule of live events will be shared on the collaborative’s website. So far, it includes “Are You Ready? The New Way of Aging” by Dr. Tonya Spark on Aug. 20; and “9-1-1 – What’s Your Emergency” on heart attacks and strokes on Sept. 25. The AARP meeting Sept. 20 will also be shared. Much more is expected to be added over coming weeks. Among the content that’s been suggested, Emily notes, are classes on estate planning, Medicare, home health and hospice options, medical management, healthy eating, dealing with diabetes and the Bone Builders exercise class. Other possibilities include interactive Bingo games and Bible study.

Members of the Age Well committee include representatives of the five Clay County sites – Moorhead’s Senior Connections, Hawley’s REACH, the Ulen and Barnesville senior centers and Rollag Lutheran Church – as well as Lakes and Prairies Community Action, Dancing Sky Area Agency on Aging, and Lutheran Social Services of Minnesota.

“Our main focus is to provide people with the resources and education they need to age well right in their own communities,” Trudy says of the two-year project. “This is an innovative way to enrich those opportunities that’s close at hand. In February, when the wind chill is 30 below, it’s going to be so nice to just turn it on.”

More information on Age Well sites and upcoming events is available online at www.claycountyagewell.org.

FUTURE TOPICS

Month / Date:	Topic:
September 2019	Caregivers Senior Safety Seminar
October	Medicare 101 Who gets Grandma’s Yellow Pie Plate?
November	Caregiver Conference Falls Prevention
December	Grief & Loss
January 2020	Stress & Farming
February	What to Look for when Choosing Senior Living
March	Farm Estate Planning
April	Dementia Friends
May	The FILE (End of Life Planning)
June 6/15	Elder Abuse
July	How to Stay Safe @ Home
August	Alzheimer’s Topic

