



Vital Aging Network  
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## November 2005 Bulletin

### In this issue...

FORUM...1

SPOTLIGHT ON SUE  
DIEKMAN...2

LEADERSHIP GROUP  
NOMINATIONS...2

DATES TO PUT  
ON YOUR CALENDAR...3

## VAN FORUM NOVEMBER 8

### Loss But Not Lost: The Challenges of Maintaining Mental Health

*Presenter:* Mary Claire Wahlberg

*Time and Place:* Tuesday, November 8, from 10 a.m. to noon, Lenox Community Center, 6715 Minnetonka Blvd, St. Louis Park

“Loss But Not Lost” will focus on the numerous losses seniors may experience concurrently and the impact this has on one’s sense of well-being. The purpose of the forum is to make us aware of numerous changes associated with aging and become more empathic about the motional and physical pain accompanying loss. Loss often leads to depression, which is under-assessed, under-diagnosed, and under-treated, yet highly treatable.

Since 1968, Mary Claire Wahlberg, LicSW (licensed social worker) has been a clinician, supervisor, consultant and educator at Hamm Psychiatric Clinic in St. Paul. She managed a satellite clinic in Anoka for 16 years and was the clinic’s education and training director until her retirement. Since 2000, Mary Claire has been researching the mental health needs of seniors. Upon her retirement in 2002, she returned to work 12 hours a week as the senior services liaison, continuing to develop treatment and education presentations around the mental health needs of seniors.

*Directions:* Lenox Community Center is located at 6715 Minnetonka Blvd; St. Louis Park. The location lies between Hampshire and Georgia Avenues, west of Highway 100. The coordinator for the Lenox Center is Rita Kach, who can be reached at 952-928-6418.

*Questions?* Need a ride? Call VAN at 612-626-5555. Everyone is welcome. There is no charge for VAN’s monthly forums.

## **SPOTLIGHT ON Sue Diekman, VAN Program Director**

Sue Diekman joined VAN as a program director on October 3. In that capacity, she will serve as the principal investigator for the three-year, \$650,000 grant from The Atlantic Philanthropies (AP), which VAN received in June to increase VAN's visibility and expand existing programs statewide.

Sue has more than 15 years experience in the field of communications, advocacy and nonprofit management. Most recently, she was the senior director of communications at the University of Minnesota Alumni Association (UMAA), where she was responsible for oversight of the association's legislative advocacy, media relations, Web site, graphic design and brand management. She also served as the publisher of *Minnesota* magazine, the UMAA's official alumni publication.

Prior to that, she held senior communications positions at Concordia University St. Paul; Tunheim Partners, a Twin Cities public relations agency; and the Minnesota Trial Lawyers Association. She was also the founder and first executive director of the Minnesota Consumer Alliance, a civil justice, health and safety nonprofit affiliated with the Minnesota Trial Lawyers Association.

"I am honored to assume this leadership position in VAN," said Sue. "VAN is a dynamic program with an important mission."

During her first couple of weeks on the job, Sue has been meeting with VAN stakeholders and she attended a VAN Forum and a class in the Advocacy Leadership in Vital Aging certificate program. "I am truly inspired by the people I have met," said Sue. "They are community leaders who are connected to their passions and who are committed to fighting ageism and improving the quality of life in their communities."

VAN is an affiliated program of the University of Minnesota College of Continuing Education. Kay Cooper, Assistant to the Dean, serves as VAN's liaison with the College.

AP is a group of Bermuda-based charitable foundations whose grant investments are focused internationally in four program fields: aging, disadvantaged children and youth; population health; and reconciliation and human rights.

Sue can be reached via email at [sdiekman@cce.umn.edu](mailto:sdiekman@cce.umn.edu).

## **NOMINATION FOR VAN LEADERSHIP GROUP**

A 20-member Leadership Group guides the work of the Vital Aging

Network. Their charge is to promote VAN's core values of self-determination, community involvement, and personal enrichment for and with older adults through education and advocacy.

In 2004, the Leadership Group approved a three-year work plan to accomplish four goals:

1. Raise public awareness and promote vital aging.
2. Expand the quantity and quality of vital aging opportunities through partnerships.
3. Advocate for changes in communities and institutions to support vital aging.
4. Develop VAN as a sustainable network of networks.

Because members of the Leadership Group fill three-year, staggered terms, one-third of the members are elected each January. Nominations are now open. Consider nominating yourself or someone else for this volunteer leadership task.

VAN is looking for:

- Personal commitment. Time Investment: monthly Leadership Group meetings; if possible, attendance at monthly forums; participation in one committee; and members must be passionate about advancing VAN's mission.
- Contribution of resources. Be willing to share your strengths, skills, talents and wisdom. Be willing to approach prospective funders. And personally contribute some dollar amount so that VAN can demonstrate 100% Leadership Group commitment.
- Networking. Be a member of a robust network with a significant sphere of influence.
- Vital Agers. Vital Agers who are not paid staff in the field of aging will comprise the majority of Leadership Group members.

The Leadership Group offers opportunities to:

- Make a difference by advancing VAN's mission
- Learn and increase personal development
- Connect with a social and organization network (and have some fun now and then!)

To make a nomination, send the nominee's or your name, if you are nominating yourself, and contact information including an email address if available, to [van@umn.edu](mailto:van@umn.edu). We'll send a brief application form to that individual. Completed applications are due by December 1, 2005.

## **DATES TO PUT ON YOUR CALENDAR**

Let VAN know if you have events in your community for vital agers...email [van@umn.edu](mailto:van@umn.edu)



**November 8, 10:00 a.m. – noon**  
**VAN Monthly Forum: Loss But Not Lost: The Challenges of**

## **Maintaining Mental Health**

See page one of this Bulletin for more information.  
Location: Lenox Community Center, St. Louis Park

### **November 11 – 12**

#### **Soul Conference: Mystics For Our Time**

Join Coleman Barks, preeminent translator of the works of Rumi on 11/11 with “Reading Rumi” and John Grim, president of the American Teilhard Association and Shawn Madigan, CSJ, Ph.D. on 11/12 with discussions on Julian of Norwich, Sojourner Truth and Dorothy Day. The culminating event is the Midwest premier of the Canadian film “Rumi-Turning Ecstatic.”

Cost: \$195 for the full conference or \$35 advance / \$40 at the door for the second day.

Location: The Nov 11 session will be held at Pax Christi Catholic Community, 12100 Pioneer Trail, Eden Prairie. The Nov 12 session will be held at Rauenhorst Hall, Coeur de Catherine, College of St. Catherine, 2004 Randolph Ave, St. Paul, there is a \$35 advance or \$40 at the door

Register: Tickets are available by calling 612-343-3390 or [www.ticketworks.com](http://www.ticketworks.com)

For more information visit [www.wisdomwaycenter.org](http://www.wisdomwaycenter.org) or call 651-696-2788.

### **November 15, 8:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.**

#### **Developing a Volunteer Transportation Program In Your Faith Community**

Join Carolyn Klaver, RN to learn how to create a transportation program for your congregants that promotes safety and reduces risk. You will learn successful strategies to recruit, train and manage volunteer drivers.

Location: Knollwood Place Apartments Auditorium, Ackerberg Campus, 630 Phillips Parkway, St. Louis Park.

Register: RSVP to help determine the number of handouts to Joy Gordon at [jgordon@jfcsmpls.org](mailto:jgordon@jfcsmpls.org) or call 952-542-4819 by November 10.

### **November 15, 1:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.**

#### **Lifestyles for a Healthy Brain: Can We Prevent Dementia?**

We hear so much about healthy aging these days. Are there things we need to know about keeping our brains as healthy as our hearts? Join FamilyMeans and presenter Dr. Catherine Johnson from the Metropolitan Area Agency on Aging to learn the latest information on how our brains age including implications for vital aging. Learn about the types, causes and risk factors for dementia and identify ways to maintain a healthy brain.

Location: FamilyMeans, 1875 Northwestern Ave S, Stillwater

Cost: Free, but space is limited so pre-registration is requested, call 651-439-4840.

### **November 17, 9 a.m. – noon**

#### **Spirituality of Grandparenting**

Join Richelle Pearl-Koller, MA, in a morning of reflection where participants consider the spiritual exchange between grandparents and their grandchildren including spiritual gifts, the impact on life's journey, spiritual legacies and grandparenting and learning about God. The reflection will include input, dialogue, prayer and ritual. Participants are invited to bring pictures of their grandchildren.

Location: Carondelet Center, 1890 Randolph Ave, St. Paul

Cost: \$35

For more information visit [www.wisdomwaycenter.org](http://www.wisdomwaycenter.org) or call 651-696-2788

**December 8, 7 p.m.**

**Botox, Plastic Surgery and the Fountain of Youth. Is That All There is To Aging Well?**

In celebrating ten successful, growth-filled years of transforming healthcare, the Center for Spirituality & Healing invites you to join bestselling author and renowned health and wellness expert Dr. Andrew Weil, author of the new book "Healthy Aging," for an inspiring discussion on aging well. Facilitated by author and motivational speaker Richard Leider, learn what aging means for our bodies and our minds and hear Dr. Weil's practical, yet innovative, advice on how all of us can learn to age more healthily, happily and gracefully.

Location: Fitzgerald Theatre, St. Paul

Cost: \$40 admission includes Dr. Weil's new book

Register: Visit [www.csh.umn.edu](http://www.csh.umn.edu) for more information.

VAN connects older adults with education to promote and support their self-sufficiency, community participation, and personal enrichment. VAN is supported by the University of Minnesota's College of Continuing Education. Visit the VAN Web site at [www.van.umn.edu](http://www.van.umn.edu)



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