

Area Bloggers



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Looking for Volunteers

AUGUST 19TH 2014 BY DEE LOFLIN

Looking for Volunteers

*Submitted Article to
news@showmetimes.com*

Age Spots - By Ruth Dockins

Volunteers Needed

This is a good opportunity for people interested in working part time and getting student loans paid or getting help to further their education. Plus it is an opportunity to work with people from all walks of life. Most anyone who is on Medicare or near Medicare or have parents on Medicare has questions about it. The volunteer would go through the CLAIM (Community Leaders Assisting the Insured of Missouri) training (it's about 4 days of training) we would be available to help with the difficult cases.

They are asking for a commitment of about 19 hours a week for one year or if someone wants to work only 10 – 12 hours a week they could get about ½ of the benefits.

The work is very rewarding but also sometimes very intense. Jackie, Liz, Meagan and I would be available to help answer the difficult questions. The busiest time would be from October 15 – December 7 which is open enrollment for the Prescription Drug program.

We at Aging Matters, CLAIM and AmeriCorps are looking for volunteers interested in helping serve the Medicare population in our area for one year from September 1, 2014 – August 31, 2015.

The benefits for service are:

- €€€€€€ * *Taxable living allowance of \$5,000 paid in bi-weekly installments*
- €€€€€ *€ *Work hours would be about 19 hours a week*
- €€€€€€ * *Upon successful completion of the term of service, eligible members will receive an education award up to \$2,822.00. This award can be used to repay qualified student loans, or for further education. It can be used by the volunteer or by their children, foster children or grandchildren.*
- €€€€€€ * *While the volunteer is participating the accrued interest on qualified student loans will be paid by AmeriCorps*
- €€€€€€€ * *Mileage reimbursement for travel*

The volunteer must be at least 17 years of age and a high school graduate or have a GED. Must not have worked for an insurance company within the last year and must be able to use the computer and internet.

In my opinion this is a wonderful opportunity for someone either to help with their own education or help with a child or grand child's education. Plus the work will be very rewarding. I can speak from experience on this since this is something I do every day. We just need more people helping us. As the population ages and more people are becoming eligible for Medicare we need more people helping distribute the information.

If you know anyone who could benefit from this or would be interested in assisting us share information about Medicare please ask them to contact me at 1-800-392-8771 or locally at 573-335-3331 or respond to this email.

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Medicare Prescription Drug Premiums Should Not Rise

AUGUST 14TH 2014 BY DEE LOFLIN

Medicare Prescription Drug Premiums Should Not Rise

*Submitted Article to
news@showmetimes.com*

Age Spots - By Ruth Dockins

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) projected today that the average premium for a basic Medicare Part D prescription drug plan in 2015 will increase by about \$1, to an estimated \$32 per month, continuing its historically low growth rate. Today's projection for the average premium for 2015 is based on bids submitted by drug and health plans for basic drug coverage for the 2015 benefit year, and calculated by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services Office of the Actuary.

Keep in mind, many of the plans should have premiums even lower. Also keep in mind that the cost of the premium is not your only consideration when choosing a plan. No matter how cheap the premium is, if it does not cover the drugs you take it is not a good plan.

This news coming to us from CMS, is thanks in part, to continued unprecedented low levels of growth in Medicare spending and continued savings by seniors and people with disabilities on out of pocket drug costs. More seniors are becoming Medicare savvy. Seniors are on the lookout for Medicare fraud and abuse *and finding and reporting it!* According to the recent Medicare Trustees report, the life of the Trust Fund has been extended to 2030, up from its projection of 2017 in 2009. The report also shows that Part B premiums are expected to stay the same rather than increase for the second year in a row.

"Seniors and people with disabilities are benefiting from steady prescription drug premiums and a competitive and transparent marketplace for Medicare drug plans," said CMS Administrator Marilyn Tavenner. "And thanks to the Affordable Care Act, they are seeing improved benefits and saving on their medications." The Affordable Care Act has targeted 2020 to close the donut hole completely for prescription drugs but each year it reduces the cost to the individual by a small amount.

The upcoming Medicare annual open enrollment period – which begins October 15 and ends December 7 – allows for people with Medicare to choose their plans for next year by comparing their current coverage and quality ratings to other plan offerings. New benefit choices are effective January 1, 2015.

In late September everyone who has a Medicare Part D plan will get information from their current plan stating what the cost for the premium will be next year and what drugs they will cover. You should look this information over carefully and if you don't like what you see call us at 1-800-392-8771 or locally at 573-335-3331. Jackie, Liz, Meagan or I will be happy to help you find the best plan for you.

To learn more about the Medicare Part D prescription drug benefit, go to: <http://www.medicare.gov/part-d/>.

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Greenwing Event Scheduled at Otter Slough

JULY 22ND 2014 BY DEE LOFLIN

Greenwing Event Scheduled at Otter Slough

Dexter, Missouri - It's July and local duck watchers know it's time for the 6th Annual Greenwing Event at Otter Slough.

The Dexter Chapter of Ducks Unlimited and the Missouri Department of Conservation provide this unique opportunity each year during late July at Otter Slough Conservation Area.

The 2014 event is Saturday, July 26 and begins at 7 am. This event is free and open to the public.

We will meet in the large parking lot next to Cypress Lake. Department of Conservation biologists are going to demonstrate electrofishing techniques in Cypress Lake.

Everyone in attendance will have a front row seat while fisheries biologists run a shocking boat along the shoreline. Meanwhile, MDC staff and Ducks Unlimited volunteers will be checking traps for mourning doves and wood ducks.

Any ducks and doves trapped that morning will be brought to the headquarters to be banded and released. We hope to capture enough birds to allow each youth to help band and release their own dove or duck.

If you have attended past events, you know that trapping ducks and doves can be unpredictable. We currently have mourning doves and wood ducks hitting bait sites regularly so keep your wings crossed. Regardless of trapping success, this will be an excellent opportunity to spend some quality family time in the outdoors and meet Conservation Department and Ducks Unlimited folks in person.

We have a couple other activities planned which are sure to be fun for everyone and Ducks Unlimited has provided some nice items for the kids.

The day's activities should be completed by 10 am depending upon weather and trapping success. For more information please contact Mark Reed at 573-421-3240, Otter Slough at 573-624-5821, or Mike Wilburn at 573-421-3713.

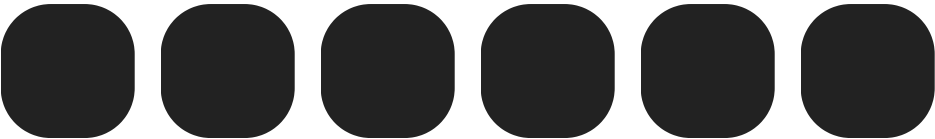
Mark Reed

Stoddard County Conservation Agent

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Age Spots - Health Insurance Marketplace

JUNE 27TH 2014 BY DEE LOFLIN

Age Spots - Health Insurance Marketplace

*Submitted Article to
news@showmetimes.com*

Age Spots - By Ruth Dockins

Health Insurance Marketplace

Remember those of you who have Medicare do not need to worry about the new health coverage, so you have my permission to move on to other articles in this newspaper. The rest of you really need to take a look at the following article. This information is provided by the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services.

Q: Now that I have health care coverage through the new Health Insurance Marketplace, are there materials available for me and my family to understand how to use this new health insurance?

A: Thanks to the health care law, millions of Americans now have quality health coverage through the Health Insurance Marketplace, Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP). You, or someone you know, may have health coverage for the very first time, or after many years without coverage.

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) has launched a new nationwide initiative, Coverage to Care, to help you, and all the newly covered, get the information you need to know, such as:

How to make the most of your health care coverage

How to find the right doctor

When and where to seek treatment, for example, emergency room care only should be used in the case of an emergency

Why getting the right preventive services is important

To help answer questions you might have about your new health care coverage, and to use it appropriately to get the care and preventive services that are right for you, Coverage to Care has a number of tools available at **CMS.gov**. Many are available in both English and Spanish, and more resources will be developed over the next few months.

The "Roadmap to Better Care and a Healthier You" includes eight steps which will walk you through everything you need to know to make the most of your coverage, including what common health care coverage terms mean; how to prepare for an appointment with a provider; what to expect when visiting the doctor's office; and how to take advantage of preventive services that can help you stay healthy. The Roadmap also has a lot of information for you that you can refer back to as you journey to better health and well-being, including a list of resources and a personal health screening log.

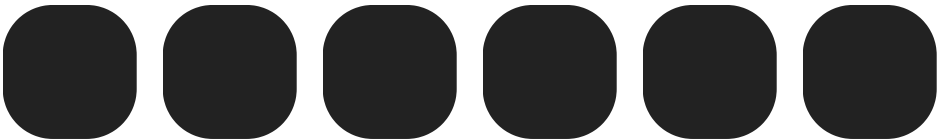
Another tool is a series of videos that contain tips for you to navigate your new health plan and fully enjoy its benefits. Videos include segments on “Understanding the Plan;” “Words to Know;” “Finding a Provider;” “Making an Appointment;” and “My First Visit.”

It’s great to have the security and peace of mind that comes from having quality health care coverage. But it’s important to fully understand when, where, and how to use it to get the right care in the right place at the right time—and not just when you’re sick, but to stay well. The Coverage to Care resources can help you do that, and help you stay healthy and make the most of your health coverage.

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MO Dept of Conservation Managed Deer Hunt Apps

JUNE 24TH 2014 BY DEE LOFLIN

MO Dept of Conservation Managed Deer Hunt Apps

Missouri - Beginning July 1, deer hunters can apply online for a shot at nearly 5,700 openings for more than 100 Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) managed deer hunts taking place from mid-September through mid-January. Most hunters may apply for only one managed hunt per year. Wheelchair-confined hunters may apply for more than one managed hunt offered at select conservation areas.

The online application period ends July 31. The deadline in previous years was mid-August, but has been shortened to allow hunters more time to be notified of their selections for early-season managed hunts.

Managed-hunt dates, locations, and other details will be listed on the Department of Conservation website starting July 1 at mdc.mo.gov/node/11252. MDC will post drawing results at the same website address from Sept. 2 through Jan 15. Successful applicants will receive area maps and other information regarding their hunts by mail.

Details about managed hunts are also available in the "2014 Fall Deer & Turkey Hunting Regulations and Information" booklet available by July 1 at MDC offices and nature centers, from permit vendors around the state, and currently online at mdc.mo.gov.

The Conservation Department holds the annual electronic drawing to determine who gets to participate in managed deer hunts at conservation areas, state parks, national wildlife refuges, urban parks, and other public areas. The hunts are open to Missouri residents and nonresidents, and help achieve MDC's deer-management goals for the state while also providing additional hunting opportunities. Types of hunts include archery, crossbow, muzzleloader, historic methods, and modern firearms, plus youth hunts and hunts for people with disabilities.

MDC uses a weighted-preference-point system to give unsuccessful applicants an advantage in future drawings. Hunters who apply for the first time or who were drawn for hunts the previous year are statistically less likely to be drawn than those who entered but were not drawn in previous years.

Hunters may apply individually or as groups of up to six, except for youth hunts. Youths 11 years of age or older by the date of the desired hunt who are hunter-education certified may apply individually or with one other youth for youth hunts and must be accompanied on the hunt by a qualified adult mentor.

All applicants will need their nine-digit Conservation ID number to complete the application process. Conservation ID numbers are listed on hunting and fishing permits, and on Missouri Conservation Heritage Cards.

For more information on MDC managed deer hunts, visit mdc.mo.gov/node/3867.

Resident or nonresident managed deer hunting permits are required to participate in managed hunts. These permits will be available to successful applicants beginning Sept. 2 from any permit vendor statewide, or online through MDC's e-Permits at mdc.mo.gov/epermits.

Hunters born on or after Jan. 1, 1967, and who are 16 or older, must successfully complete an approved hunter education course to qualify to buy firearms hunting permits and participate in managed hunts. Youth 11 through 15 may hunt without hunter education certification when accompanied by a qualified adult mentor during managed hunts open to all. Mentors also are required to be hunter-education certified, unless exempt by age. Hunter education classes fill up quickly as hunting seasons approach. For more information on hunter education options and classes, visit mdc.mo.gov/node/3095.

Help Protect Missouri Deer!

Conservation makes Missouri a great place to hunt and watch deer. Infectious diseases such as Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) threaten Missouri deer, nearly 520,000 Missouri deer hunters, thousands of landowners, more than 2 million wildlife watchers, 12,000 Missouri jobs, and Missouri businesses and communities that depend on the \$1 billion in economic activity related to deer hunting and watching.

The Missouri Department of Conservation is working with hunters, landowners, businesses, and partner organizations, along with captive deer breeders and big-game hunting operations, to identify and limit the spread of CWD in Missouri.

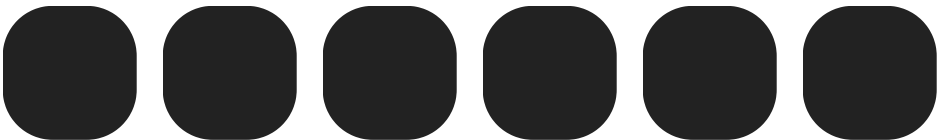
As part of these efforts, MDC is proposing common-sense regulation changes for deer breeding facilities and big-game hunting preserves to help limit the spread of

CWD. Changes involve more effective fencing to separate captive and free-ranging deer, restricting the importation of live deer into Missouri, and mandatory disease testing. The Conservation Department encourages citizens to get involved by sharing their comments on these regulations at mdc.mo.gov/deerhealth.

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