An Exclusive Interview With Ellen Burstyn

‘Tis the Season of Giving

Little Readers

Hot Cocoa for Brain Health

COMING of AGE™
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Presented by Council on Aging of West Florida

WINTER 2013

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“Tis the season!” I hope this issue finds you well and preparing to enjoy a wonderful holiday with family and friends. Unfortunately, many will experience a less prosperous holiday and New Year. There are many elderly people in our community who are facing poverty, loneliness and bittersweet memories of holidays past.

Amidst all the hustle and bustle, I hope we can all slow down to do something special for those who may not have as much to look forward to as some of us. Making someone’s day brighter can be easier than one might think. As they used to say in the Alka-Seltzer commercials “Try it, you’ll like it!”

If you would like to do so by helping us care for seniors and their families in our community, your support will make a difference. If you would like to mail a check, there is a response card on page 14 that can be included with your donation. If you prefer to donate online, please visit www.coawfla.org. You can also set up a monthly recurring gift that allows you to spread out your giving. Whichever option you choose, your gift will be greatly appreciated.

Winter is also a time for snuggling up and doing some reading. We hope you will find this issue the perfect “companion.” You might want to add a cup of hot cocoa to your reading time according to the article, “Hot Cocoa for Brain Health,” on page 23. In the article, you’ll learn what the American Academy of Neurology is saying about hot cocoa and Alzheimer’s disease.

We also hope you will enjoy our exclusive interview with Academy Award and Tony Award winner Ellen Burstyn. In addition to her acting, Burstyn was the first woman president of Actors Equity, the actors’ union, from 1982 to 1985.

The Affordable Care Act has been a hot topic lately, but do you really know what it means for senior citizens? To find out, check out the article on page 27.

I would like to take a moment to congratulate Emily Lullo, one of our Coming of Age team, on winning a Silver Award in the 2013 National Mature Media Awards for her article, “Social Media: Not Just for the Younger Set,” which was published on our Spring 2012 issue. Nice work, Emily!

On behalf of the board of directors, staff and clients of Council on Aging of West Florida and the entire Coming of Age team, I wish you the very best. Happy Holidays!

Until next time, enjoy life – you’ve earned it!
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Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) in Florida are those programs that are offered to eligible senior citizens in either a community setting (e.g. an assisted living facility) or in the home of a senior. These services can include home delivered meals, adult day care, transportation, personal care (e.g. assistance with bathing), respite for caregivers, homemaker (assistance with keeping a home clean and safe) and more. They form an array of services which are designed to offer seniors the opportunity to live in the least restrictive environment possible; ideally in their own homes or the home of a loved one. For the past decade Florida has funded these programs using two major sources of funding; Medicaid funds (a combination of federal and state funding) and Florida general revenue funds (money the state receives via the sales tax). Now, who is eligible to receive these services?

Well, it can get complicated (wouldn’t you expect that of a government program?), but let me really simplify it for the reader. IF you are a senior citizen who is frail, suffering from some chronic medical condition and in danger of having to go into a nursing home and IF you are of modest income ($2,130/month or less for an individual) with very few assets ($2,000 or less for an individual), you could receive HCBS services paid for by Medicaid. However, IF you are “just above” the Medicaid monthly income limit or asset limit for an individual but need HCBS services, it is possible to receive them via funding by a Florida general revenue funded program such as Community Care for the Elderly (CCE). Unfortunately, funding for such general revenue programs as
CCE has not kept pace with the enormous growth in our senior population. What does that growth look like in Florida?

According to Florida’s Office of Economic and Demographic Research (EDR), Florida’s population is forecast to grow by almost 4.8 million between 2010 and 2030. The older population (age 60 and older) will account for most of Florida’s population growth, representing 56.9 percent of the gains. Florida’s younger population (age 0-17) will account for 13.8 percent of the gains. This enormous growth of the senior population is going to increase some of the existing problems Florida faces.

According to the EDR, health care is a big budget driver in our state. They note that one-third of Florida residents age 65 and older have some type of disability and the elderly and disabled Medicaid recipients account for an estimated 60 percent of Medicaid spending. EDR also points out the following: the use of acute and long term care services is high; the majority of nursing home residents rely on Medicaid support after their care exhausts their savings and qualify for Medicaid assistance. So it makes economic sense to provide HCBS services to seniors who do not “qualify” for those services under Medicaid funding. Unfortunately, because of the numbers of seniors needing assistance with HCBS services and because of limited CCE funding, Florida had a waiting list of almost 27,000 seniors waiting for CCE services in 2011-2012. This is a huge problem. Why so?

According to the Department of Elder Affairs (DOEA), in 2011-2012 some 2,236 seniors who were on the CCE waiting list went into a nursing home and that cost was paid for by Medicaid. The state’s “share” of this Medicaid cost was over 61 million dollars in general revenue funding (2,236 times the state share of Medicaid cost of nursing home care which is $27,326). IF those 2,236 seniors had received HCBS services at an average cost of $5,793/year (this is the CCE state average of providing HCBS services to a CCE client) it would have cost the state approximately 13 million dollars for the year. This would have meant a potential savings to the state of 48 million dollars (61 million dollars state share of Medicaid costs minus the 13 million dollars to serve 2,236 seniors on the waiting list). This is potentially a huge savings for a small investment. Thus, according to OPPAGA, CCE may help reduce the rate of growth in Medicaid spending for nursing home care by providing a minimal level of HCBS services to frail seniors who planned for their retirement, but simply did not plan to live to be 85, 90 or 100+ years old; have exhausted their financial resources but have not yet become impoverished in order to qualify for Medicaid HCBS services and yet, as previously noted, would have to resort to Medicaid if placed in a nursing home. So for a small “investment” in state general revenue funds which would serve those on the CCE waiting list who are the frailest and most at risk of nursing home placement, Florida could save four times the amount spent on CCE HCBS services. Now that is a great investment!
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‘Tis the season for your sweet tooth to engage in sugar overloads, family time, holiday shopping and that last chance to give back before the year’s end. Between the hustle and bustle of the season, please don’t forget to think of others who are less fortunate. The smallest contribution to a charity still makes a huge impact. When you think about it, donating really is a win-win situation. You’re not only extending a helping hand to others in need, but you can also gain personal benefits as well.
It has actually been proven that on average charities receive 40 percent of their annual contributions in the last few weeks of the year. So what makes this happen? Studies say that more people feel inclined to donate during the holiday season due to an appeal they received from the charity, the religious spirit of the season or tax benefits received from donating.

What makes you want to give?

In a poll conducted by Charity Navigator, 175 donors and 40 charities were asked a series of questions regarding year-end giving. One question that stood out was, “What important issues do you consider about a charity before giving?”

The top three highest issues they considered were the charity’s level of accountability and transparency, the charity’s financial health and the charity’s results. All of these components are extremely important to look into. It is very important to research a charity before donating your money.

In an article by USA Today in 2010, Sandra Block suggests not only getting information on the charity’s finances, but also checking the charity’s tax status. Many small non-profits lost their tax-exempt status in 2010 because they missed the deadline to file an annual return with the IRS. This is very important to know because if a charity is not tax-exempt, you cannot write it off on your taxes. The IRS offers a few tips as well when it comes to year-end giving.

According to the IRS, there are a few different things to consider when donating clothing or household items and monetary donations. Keep in mind that in order for clothing and household items to be deductible, the items donated to a charity must be in good used condition or better. The IRS defines household items to include:

Two Ways to Stretch Your Dollars

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Matching Gifts

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furniture, furnishings, electronics, appliances and linens. Also, in order to be deductible, you need to have a receipt that includes the name of the charity, date of the contribution, and a detailed description of the donated property. Many charities automatically issue receipts like this.

In contrast, monetary donations are slightly different. Donations of money to a charity include those made in cash or by check, electronic funds transfer, credit card or payroll deduction. Don’t forget your receipt! A receipt for monetary donations can be a bank record or written communication from the charity showing the name of the charity, the date the donation was made and the amount of the contribution.

Whether you choose to donate items from the garage or cash, remember that all contributions are only deductible in the year they were made. For more information regarding tax deduction and charitable giving, visit www.IRS.gov.

One of the best quotes from today’s Mother of Giving, Oprah Winfrey, is, “I don’t think you ever stop giving. I really don’t. I think it’s an on-going process. And it’s not just about being able to write a check. It’s being able to touch somebody’s life.” Please take a minute this holiday season to make someone else’s brighter. Here at Council on Aging of West Florida, we cannot thank our donors enough for their contributions. If you would like to donate or have questions about our organization, please go to www.coawfla.org or call (850) 432-1475.
Council on Aging of West Florida received the $1,672 grant in April 2013 to fund a Little Reader project in conjunction with its Foster Grandparent Program, a program where older adults share their time and wisdom with children in a variety of educational settings. The funds were used to purchase two book sets for 14 Kindergarten and 1st grade classrooms in Escambia and Santa Rosa counties including those at Ensley Elementary, Lincoln Park Primary, McArthur Elementary, Molino Park Elementary, Montclair Elementary, Myrtle Grove Elementary, O.J. Semmes Elementary, Oakcrest Elementary, West Pensacola Elementary, Oriole Beach Elementary, and Pea Ridge Elementary. Each set contained five copies of 16 titles, including biographies and word family readers, allowing the Foster Grandparents to work on leveled reading with small groups in the participating classrooms.

Thanks to a grant from International Paper Foundation, 238 Kindergarten and 1st grade students in Escambia and Santa Rosa counties are getting extra help with reading.
The project began at the beginning of the 2013-2014 school year with the expected outcomes being that Foster Grandparents will develop an understanding of leveled reading and the children identified as reading below grade level will improve reading scores as well as develop skill sets necessary to improve grades and confidence. As the year progresses, teachers will continue to provide feedback on the project and determine if reading scores have improved.

Three months into this project, the feedback from teachers is positive. Students are excited about reading, sounding out words more often, wanting to read out loud more, and following the words with their fingers to stay on track. One child that was held back last year due to not being able to read loves the word family readers and wants to read all the time. The Foster Grandparents, affectionately called Grannies by the students, help the children read with ease and understand how to correct a child when he or she does not understand what is being read. The Foster Grandparents help the children sound out words and are excited to see when a child understands what he or she has read. Many go the extra mile.

Ms. Nelson from McArthur Elementary said of her Foster Grandparent, “Ms. Lucy has so much patience with each and every child. Her love for children and reading shows through in everything she does in the classroom. With the reading material that was given to Ms. Lucy, the children seem to comprehend more of what is being taught to help them with the standardized testing that will be coming soon.”

Many go the extra mile. Barbara Harris, the Foster Grandparent in Ms. Cain’s 1st grade class at Ensley Elementary, brought in outfits for the children to dress up and act out historical parts in the biography readers. According to Ms. Cain, “Granny Barbara is a joy and you can tell how much she loves children in everything she tries to do, especially in reading. With the knowledge that she learned from the reading program training she went to, she has helped in the success of my students’ reading skills. We love her.”

Many teachers feel the books also allow the students to have fun and the children want to learn instead of feeling they have to learn. Ms. Vickery at Ensley Elementary was very appreciative of the books and sent a note which read, “Thank you so very much for the wonderful Word Family Readers and Very First Biographies! You were most generous to share such a treat with us. The children will enjoy and learn as they read these little books. They are just right for them at this time of the year. New books are our favorite treats. Thank you so very much for your thoughtfulness and generosity to us. I appreciate very much the Foster Grandparent Program. It has been such a blessing to me through Ms. Annie O’Bannon. It is a very special program.” We agree. Thank you, International Paper Foundation.
Nicholas R. Medley

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Chili Recipes

Cooler temperatures call for hot, hearty meals that warm you inside and out and a steaming bowl of chili does just that. Chili is the perfect comfort food for the winter season and the simple combination of beans, meat and sauce can be customized and tweaked endlessly. Whether you prefer a spicy concoction, a vegetarian delight, or a traditional style with a side of buttery cornbread, there is a chili to suit any taste.

We collected a few recipes of varying versions from local chili lovers to share and inspire you to create your own perfect bowl to warm you through and through this season.

**Turkey Chili**

This simple recipe submitted by Linda Barnard saves on fat by using ground turkey instead of beef and including some veggies that add heartiness without excess calories.

**Ingredients**
10 ounces extra-lean ground turkey breast
1 medium onion, diced
2 (28 oz.) cans diced tomatoes
2 medium zucchini, diced
1 medium yellow squash, diced
1 (15 oz.) can kidney beans
1 (15 oz.) can fat-free reduced sodium beef-broth
4 celery stalks, diced
2 green bell peppers, diced
1 (1 ¼ oz) package of dry chili seasoning
Garlic powder
Small can of tomato paste

Spray a large nonstick skillet with nonstick cooking spray and set over medium-high heat. Add the turkey and onion and sauté until browned, about five minutes.

Transfer the browned turkey and onion mixture to a large soup pot and add the tomatoes, zucchini, squash, beef broth, celery, bell pepper, tomato paste, garlic powder and chili seasoning. Bring to a simmer over medium heat. Continue to simmer until the vegetables are tender, about 30 minutes.

75 Calories, 1g fat, 3g fiber
Cincinnati Chili Five-Way

Mary Crosby’s take on chili is a Cincinnati classic. The five refers to the number of additions that Cincinnati natives are known to serve with their chili.

Ingredients

Cooking spray
1 pound ground turkey or chicken
½ pound ground sirloin
2 ½ cups chopped onion (about 2 medium), divided
2 minced garlic cloves
1 cup water
2 tablespoons brown sugar
2 tablespoons chili powder
3 tablespoons spicy barbecue sauce
½ teaspoon kosher salt
4 teaspoons white vinegar
¾ teaspoon ground cumin
¾ teaspoon ground cinnamon
½ teaspoon ground allspice
¼ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
¼ ounce unsweetened chocolate, chopped
1 can tomato puree

Hot cooked spaghetti
¾ cup (3 ounces) shredded cheddar cheese
1 can kidney beans, rinsed, drained and warmed

Heat a Dutch oven on medium high heat, and spray pan with cooking spray. Add meat and cook about five minutes until browned, stirring to crumble. Add 2 cups of onion and garlic; cook until onion is tender, stirring occasionally. Pour in one cup of water and add next 12 ingredients. Bring to a boil. Cover and reduce heat to low, simmering for 45 minutes. Place servings of hot, cooked spaghetti in bowls. Ladle 1 cup chili on top of spaghetti. Top each serving with beans, leftover chopped onion and cheese.

Three Bean Veggie Chili

This vegetarian chili utilizes the meaty texture of baby portobello mushrooms and adds some heat from spicy peppers. A beer cooked down adds a rich flavor, but it can be substituted for water or broth.

Ingredients

Olive oil
1 small white onion, chopped
1 ½ cup sliced baby Portobello mushrooms
1 small green pepper, chopped
½ yellow aji pepper, chopped; or substitute preferred hot pepper
2 cloves minced garlic
1 can black beans
1 can kidney beans
1 can cannellini beans
Small can of roasted tomatoes
1 tablespoon ground cumin
2 teaspoons chili powder
1 teaspoon paprika
1 teaspoon onion powder
1 teaspoon celery salt
1 teaspoon salt
1 bottle lager beer

In a large pot, heat 2 tablespoons olive oil on medium. Add onions, and sauté until translucent. Add mushrooms, green pepper, hot pepper, and garlic and cook until soft, about 5 to 10 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add the beans, spices, and tomatoes to the pot and stir. Pour almost a whole bottle of a lager style beer (or 1 ½ cups water or broth) and turn up heat to medium high. Allow mixture to lightly boil for about 10 minutes to cook down the alcohol. Reduce heat and simmer another 15-20 minutes until chili thickens. Top with cilantro and enjoy.
Sharyon’s Smokey Chili
Sharyon Miller loves her Big Green Egg cooker, even for chili! This is her version of EGGfest chili, which has a smokiness to it thanks to the barbecue flavors and applewood smoked bacon.

**Ingredients**

- 7 slices applewood-smoked bacon
- 2 cups diced yellow onions
- 2 cups diced celery
- 2 tablespoons minced garlic
- 2 pounds ground chuck
- 1/4 cup your favorite barbecue rub
- 1/4 cup chili powder
- 2 tablespoons ground cumin
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 2 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa powder
- 2 tablespoons dried oregano
- 1 1/2 cups beef stock
- 2 (28-ounce) cans diced tomatoes
- 2 (14-ounce) cans pinto beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 (14-ounce) can kidney beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 (14-ounce) can cannellini beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar
- Hot sauce, to taste
- 2 chipotle peppers in adobo

Set Big Green Egg for direct cooking with the porcelain coated grid. Preheat the EGG to 400°F. Place 2 cups of pecan chips in a large bowl with water, and let soak for one hour.

Place the Dutch Oven on the grid and preheat for 10 minutes. Add the bacon to the Dutch Oven, close the lid of the EGG, and cook until crisp. Transfer the bacon to a small bowl lined with paper towels and set aside. Place the onions, celery, and garlic in the Dutch Oven, close the lid of the EGG, and cook for 2 to 3 minutes, until soft. Add the ground chuck, barbecue rub, chili powder, cumin, cinnamon, cocoa powder, and oregano and stir well. Close the lid of the EGG and cook until the meat is cooked through and lightly browned. Add the beef stock, tomatoes, beans, and the vinegar, mixing until thoroughly combined. Season with hot sauce. Add the chipotle peppers and stir gently. Remove the Dutch Oven from the grill.

Carefully remove the grid. Scatter the pecan chips over the coals and add the Plate Setter, legs down. Place the uncovered Dutch Oven on the Plate Setter and close the lid of the EGG. Reduce the heat of the EGG to 300°F. Cook for one and a half to two hours, until the meat is thoroughly cooked and the chili has a smoky flavor. Carefully remove the chipotles and discard. Close the lid of the EGG and continue to cook the chili uncovered for 30 minutes, or until the sauce has thickened. Remove the Dutch Oven and serve.
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West Florida Healthcare
Drinking two cups of hot chocolate a day may help seniors keep their brains healthy and their thinking skills sharp, according to a study published in Neurology®, the medical journal of the American Academy of Neurology. During the study, 60 people with an average age of 73 who did not have dementia drank two cups of hot cocoa per day for 30 days. Researchers tested memory and thinking skills as well as the amount of blood flow to the brain during the tests. Researchers have discovered that blood flow plays an important role in thinking skills. This relationship between blood flow and the brain’s ability to complete tasks is called neurovascular coupling and it just might play an important role in diseases such as Alzheimer’s. By the end of the study, participants who had impaired blood flow at the start of the study (18 of the 60 participants) showed an 8.3 percent improvement in blood flow to the working areas of the brain. Test times also improved for those with impaired blood flow. Those who started with regular blood flow, showed no blood flow or testing improvement.

Chocoholics rejoice! In addition to being a delicious winter indulgence, preliminary studies from The American Academy of Neurology suggest that hot cocoa may fend off dementia by increasing blood flow to the brain.
A total of 24 of the participants also had MRI scans of the brain to look for tiny areas of brain damage. The scans found that people with impaired blood flow were also more likely to have these areas of brain damage. Half of the study participants received hot cocoa that was rich in the antioxidant flavanol, while the other half received flavanol-poor hot cocoa. There were no differences between the two groups in the results. “More work is needed to prove a link between cocoa, blood flow problems and cognitive decline,” said Paul B. Rosenberg, MD, of Johns Hopkins School of Medicine in Baltimore, who wrote an editorial accompanying the study. “But this is an important first step that could guide future studies.” The study was supported by the National Institute on Aging and the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute. To learn more about brain health, please visit www.aan.com/patients.

If you want to add chocolate to your diet, the Mayo Clinic suggests you do so in moderation because most commercial chocolate has ingredients that add fat, sugar and calories, which can contribute to weight gain, a risk factor for high blood pressure, heart disease and diabetes. Choose dark chocolate with cocoa content of 65 percent or higher. Limit yourself to around 3 ounces (85 grams) a day, which is the amount some studies have shown to be helpful.

**Healthy Hot Cocoa**

For a healthier cup of cocoa, use dark chocolate chunks, unsweetened dark cocoa or raw cacao (the healthiest option!). You can add or subtract both the cocoa and the sweetener to your taste.

1 cup milk (or nut milk)
1/4 tsp. vanilla extract
3 ounces semisweet chocolate, cut into small pieces or two tablespoons unsweetened cocoa or raw cacao powder, to taste.
Honey or maple syrup, to taste

Heat milk to scalding in a medium saucepan, add vanilla and sweetener, whisk in chocolate until melted and frothy. Serve and enjoy.
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With all this talk of individual mandates, risk pools and federally subsidized health insurance, it is easy to feel confused about how the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA, also known as Obamacare) affects you as a senior citizen. Maybe you have heard about supposed cuts to Medicare, the Part D drug coverage limit or rising premiums, but do not know how or if all this will turn out. Well, a lot is still unknown, as key parts of law have been postponed or not implemented yet, but there are important predictions and aspects of the PPACA that you should be aware of.
Perhaps the most widely publicized impact of the PPACA on Medicare is those cuts, currently estimated at about $716 billion. These are not cuts to services, however, and primarily affect hospital reimbursements, home health agency providers and Medicare Advantage. While that is a scary figure and an even scarier notion, it is important to note that these cuts were primarily made so that Medicare could last longer than current funding would allow it to. Some estimates put the current lifespan to at least 2029, much further into the future than would have been sustainable had these cuts not been made. Ironically, these cuts will actually result in millions more seniors covered under President Obama’s health care plan.

Most changes to Medicare took place in the early years of the law, and not much is expected to change in 2013 and 2014. Unfortunately, many seniors today are unaware of the current benefits provided to them as part of the PPACA.

Let’s first look at some of the positives of the PPACA. First, the law closes the “donut hole” that was causing some senior citizens to not be able to afford their prescriptions. This donut hole refers to the Part D drug coverage limit where seniors must pay for their prescriptions themselves. In 2012, the elimination of this donut hole began, as seniors got a 50 percent discount on brand-name drugs and a 14 percent discount on generic drugs covered under Part D. Each year until 2020, this donut hole closes a little more. For example, if your total drug costs are more than $2,970 in 2014, you will pay 47.5 percent of the cost for brand-name drugs and 72 percent of the cost for generic drugs. These out-of-pocket portions are gradually being reduced to 25 percent for both brand-name and generic drugs by 2020.

Preventative care is also a big part of this new law, as writers of the law hope that offering this will eventually lead to less expensive procedures that could have been avoided with proper care before the fact. This preventative care and these wellness visits are expanded to seniors, as well, without charging the Part B (medical insurance) deductible. Vaccines, flu shots, cancer screenings and more have been available to seniors since 2011 for a reduced or non-existent cost.
A common misconception is that seniors who have Medicare will be forced off of it and onto the health insurance marketplace. This is not true, as no one who has Medicare currently will have to change their plan and Medicare and Medicare Advantage will have to meet federal mandates for coverage. Those who are on Medicare are also not eligible for tax subsidies offered to those who participate in exchange plans. However, those who are older than 65 but not eligible for Medicare for whatever reason may seek out plans and subsidies on the exchange. Additionally, if you are 65 and older, and have low income with limited assets, you can now seek out expanded help from Medicaid.

Now let’s move on to some of the criticisms and less popular parts of the law’s effect on seniors. Some people have also expressed concern that there are going to be increases in premiums, but that will only affect a small percentage of higher income people.

First, some Medicare beneficiaries will pay more for their medication under the law. Higher-income Medicare participants—those who earn more than $85,000 per person or $170,000 per couple—will pay slightly more for prescription drug coverage, or Medicare Part D. This currently affects only about 5 percent of beneficiaries, but that increase is in place.

Second, some Medicare premiums are increasing. Medicare premiums are currently calculated using the Medicare Part B formula, but this has nothing to do with the PPACA. These premiums have been increasing for years, and while the new law has not stopped that growth, there are estimates that is has slowed. The law also implements a Medicare Part A (hospital insurance) tax increase of 0.9 percent for businesses that profit more than $250,000 a year, as well as employees who earn more than $200,000 a year, in order to help pay for improvements such as the donut hole elimination and free preventative care.

As part of the PPACA,
Medicare has enacted a Value-Based Payment Provision. This new mandate states that hospitals can gain or lose one percent of Medicare funding based on factors that judge the quality of care they disperse. These factors range from treatment of patients during surgery, during emergency care and patient satisfaction. If a hospital consistently ranks low or has a high rate of readmittance, that hospital could lose some Medicare funding. Medicare now focuses on quality instead of quantity of care. Some hospitals, even locally, have been hurt by this new provision, often having to cut staff. On average though, unnecessary hospital readmissions have dropped by about 70,000 nationwide in 2012.

Death panels, often referred to by opponents of the law as groups of government individuals who have authority to ration care, actually refers to the Independent Payment Advisory Board. This 15-member board is appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate to serve individual six-year terms. This board oversees Medicare costs and is charged with the responsibility of lowering the growth rate of spending. While this board has received false representation over the years, they have no actual authority and instead only advise on money-saving techniques. They will look at fraudulent Medicare claims and

Myths about the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act’s Effect on Seniors

Medicare premiums are rising. Partially true. While all health insurance costs have been rising for years, nothing in the law creates an increase for senior citizens. That said, those who make more than $85,000 per person or $170,000 per couple will continue to pay more for Part B coverage and will begin paying more for Part D.

Medicare is ending. False. The ACA does not replace Medicare with another federal insurance program, nor does it force those on Medicare into private insurance. On the contrary, Medicare will be sustainable for far longer under the new law.

Medicare participants won’t be able to continue seeing their current doctor. Partially true. While there is nothing in the law that changes which doctors Medicare patients can see, some hospitals and physicians are privately making their own business decisions based on some of the law’s new mandates, such as the Value-Based Payment Provision and greater emphasis on quality care.

The changes to Medicare will bankrupt the country—and me. False. First off, the Congressional Budget Office, which issues bipartisan reports and predictions for many of the country’s fiscal programs, estimates that increased taxes and decreased fraud will lead to a $200 billion decrease in the federal deficit over the next 10 years. Secondly, for the vast majority of Medicare beneficiaries, there are lowered costs, not increased costs. For the rest, there are some increased costs, but these are relatively minimal.

Seniors will be forced to buy costly insurance they don’t need. False. Most seniors 65 and older qualify for Medicare, which meets minimum essential coverage outlined in the law. Additionally, the law forbids these seniors to purchase insurance on the state and federal exchanges. Medicaid, CHIP and TRICARE all count as “having health insurance” and no action is required on the part of these individuals.
closely investigate wastes in the program.

So, what does all this mean for you? Well, if you currently have Medicare and/or Medicare Advantage, you meet the new requirement of having health insurance, and these plans comply with the necessary mandates of coverage outlined in the law.

You have likely already benefitted from the Part D changes, but you may not have known about the free expanded preventative care options, such as colonoscopies, mammograms and yearly wellness visits. The law encourages people to take advantage of those options, since they are less expensive and prevent more serious illnesses. And if you do become sick or disabled, your health insurance plan cannot drop you or increase your rates.

If you currently make more than $85,000 a year or you and your spouse make more than $170,000, you will begin paying slightly more for Part D coverage. Additionally, those who make that amount will continue paying more for Part B coverage, as they have since 2007. Also, if you make more than $200,000 a year, you will see an additional 0.9 percent tax to help cover the costs of these expanded programs.

To learn more about the law and the impact of it, visit the Medicare website at medicare.gov or the AARP website at aarp.org.
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An Exclusive Interview With

Ellen Burstyn

Ellen Burstyn’s illustrious 57 year acting career encompasses film, stage and television. In 1975 she became only the third woman in history to win both the Tony Award and the Academy Award in the same year, for her work in Bernard Slade’s Same Time, Next Year on Broadway and in Martin Scorsese’s Alice Doesn’t Live Here Anymore, for which she also received a Golden Globe nomination and a British Academy Award for Best Actress. Ellen has been nominated for an Academy Award five other times for The Last Picture Show (1972), The Exorcist (1974), Same Time, Next Year (1979), Resurrection (1981), and Requiem for a Dream (2000). She became a “triple crown winner” when she won her first Emmy for a guest appearance in “Law & Order: SVU” (2009), to add to her Oscar and Tony. She also recently won an Emmy for USA’s short-run series “Political Animals.”
Ellen Burstyn was the first woman elected president of Actors Equity Association (1982-85), and served as the Artistic Director of the famed Actors Studio where she studied with the late Lee Strasberg. She continues to be active there as co-president with Al Pacino and Harvey Keitel, and again is serving as the Artistic Director.

Academically, Ellen holds four honorary doctorates, one in Fine Arts from the School of Visual Arts, a Doctor of Humane Letters from Dowling College, a doctorate from The New School for Social Research, and a doctorate from Pace University. Ellen lectures throughout the country on a wide range of topics, and became a national best-selling author with the publication of her memoir, Lessons in Becoming Myself (2006), published by Riverhead Press.

COA: Hello Mrs. Burstyn. Thank you so much for taking the time to speak with me today.

EB: My pleasure. Thanks for your interest.

COA: You’re still very active in your profession and you’ve been very vocal about not letting your age define you. In what ways do you believe that seniors today could be more active and why is that so important?

EB: There was a wonderful book written some years ago about extending our lives by a woman named Bronte. She says that in our lifetimes we have added 15 years on our lives, but we haven’t added them on to the end, we’ve added them on to the middle, so that middle age lasts longer. And what used to be 65 is now 80. And so I feel like I’m just getting to 65 now instead of 80. And for me work is vital. I’m the most alive when I’m working, when I’m being creative. I also exercise and I eat well. I do the New York Times crossword puzzle every day. I do everything I can to keep learning. I’ve been reading a lot about the latest discoveries about the human brain as well as the latest discoveries of the cosmos. I think staying active is important because if we’re living longer we don’t want to live longer and be sitting in a wheelchair in front of a TV just receiving information, we want to contribute. I think it’s really important to keep not only your body active, but your brain active and for your mind to keep growing as well. I learned from tending plants, that there are always new shoots if a plant is healthy. If there isn’t growth then the plant is dying. I learned that a long time ago so I’ve always tried to keep on learning.

COA: That’s a beautiful analogy. I like that middle of life addition, I hadn’t heard it put that way before. It’s very true. Speaking of living longer, I know you eat very healthily, right?

EB: Yes, I’m not a vegan and I’m not strictly a vegetarian. I just keep meat consumption down to very little. I don’t really like meat anymore; I don’t like all the things that get injected into it. I don’t like what animal fat does to the body. But I allow myself, if ever I feel like I’m in the mood for a steak, to have one. It doesn’t happen maybe more than two or three times a year. I keep my diet mostly vegetables, fruit, yogurt, grains, beans and fish. I also eat chicken once in a while.

COA: Do you think that contributes to your current state of health and wellness?

EB: I really do. I think diet and exercise are the two most important things to keeping your body fit.

COA: What types of exercises do you enjoy doing?

EB: I walk. If it’s bad weather—if it’s cold and snowing I ride an indoor bike. I have a trainer come three times a week and lift weights and do a general workout, muscle building.

COA: I wanted to talk to you a little about age and beauty. You’ve aged so amazingly well. What are your secrets and what are your thoughts on how we as a society view women and aging?

EB: Beauty is very important to people. People listen more attentively if a person is well groomed and well put together. They’ve done studies on this. They hear what they are saying better if they are put together well. That’s why it behooves
speakers to really think about what they’re wearing and how they’re doing their hair and makeup and so forth. We all respond to beauty — we respond to the beauty of flowers and of sunsets and the beauty of the world. If you can keep yourself as beautiful as possible it attracts people. People like to look at you. Some of us are more blessed than others in our bone structure. I look like my mom — almost exactly and I’m very grateful to her for her elegant bone structure. It’s been very helpful to me. No matter what your bone structure is, you should take care of your skin so that you have some radiance so that you aren’t drab looking. I think that makes you feel better. I feel better when I look good in the mirror. If I allow myself to get overweight, which I do sometimes, I look in the mirror and I feel bad. I try to keep my body weight as low as I can. I gain weight by just looking at a chocolate bar. One of the talents I have, I can gain weight faster than anyone I know.

COA: I love it! Tell me a little bit about your politics. You’re a very vocal Democrat and big supporter of President Obama. What draws you to that party and also how do you feel about the role of politics and entertainment and how they kind of intermix?

EB: I was very relieved to read not too long ago that anywhere in the world there are two basic political ways to think. One of them is “the individual comes first” and the other one is “the tribe comes first.” And those two ways of thinking are present in all political systems anywhere in the world. What happens in the government is what occurs in the tension between those two ideas. So what’s going on with the Supreme Court right now, for instance.
Representatives are on one side and the other side and what the Supreme Court will come to is that middle ground where the tension between the opposites come together and make a statement and that becomes law.

When I read that I stopped being so confused by how anybody can have the other point of view. I was so identified with my point of view. I was in Obama’s office last year. Every president in the Oval Office has a rug with his motto woven into the circumference of the rug, and I’m going to paraphrase because I don’t remember exactly, but Obama’s is — “In order for a law to be a good law it has to be good for everybody.” — Now that’s the ‘tribe comes first’ based thinking and that’s exactly where he operates from and what I’m identified with. I believe when we are thinking about laws we should be thinking about what’s good for everybody. I stopped being so prejudiced when I read that about the other side. I was always mystified how people could be Republicans. My feelings were so clear to me. When I read that, I went, “Oh I get it. It’s what happens in the middle.” I’m holding up the left side and I know other people are holding up the right and it’s in our dialogue that our laws and political system will emerge.

COA: That’s a really wonderful way to look at it. Speaking of politics, in the 70s you were very active in the movement to free Rubin “Hurricane” Carter. What prompted you to join the cause and how do you feel about the experience now with some perspective?

EB: It came about because Billy Friedkin, the director of The Exorcist, was asked to take part in a march with Muhammad Ali in New Jersey to the governor’s office to appeal to the government to intervene in Carter’s situation so he would get a new trial. Billy suddenly couldn’t make it so he asked me if I would take his place, so I did. It was one of the more interesting and wonderful
experiences of my life because I got to hold Muhammad Ali’s hand as we marched and to spend the day with him and talk to him and it was a really beautiful, profound experience for me. I was glad that Rubin Carter got a new trial. I felt it was important that his case be reviewed because there were some very sketchy things. I haven’t looked up where he is now and what’s happening to him now.

**COA:** Currently, what kind of charities are you involved in? What are you passionate about supporting?

**EB:** There is a charity out in Rockland County that provides shelter for abused women. I am very active with that, the Rockland Family Shelter. And of course, my biggest amount of time and attention is given to the Actors Studio. I serve as artistic director as well as co-president with Al Pacino and Harvey Keitel. I support the Brady Bill. I support Emily’s List. I have a long list of organizations I support.

**COA:** The Actors Studio must be an amazing experience at this point in your career having so much experience to give. How is it playing the role of creative director there?

**EB:** I got so much from the Actors Studio from my teacher Lee Strasberg, who really changed my attitude in life. So it’s been, I don’t even know how to talk about it—how
to say how important it has been to me to have found his teachings and to the best of my ability pass that on to other actors. Because, you know, people think of actors as very adored people but in fact they’re not within the business. They’re really not treated very well and are treated disrespectfully in many ways. It’s been important to me to pass on the love of theatre, the love of the profession of acting that I got from Lee Strasberg so that people have a different depth of appreciation of what the art form is. Not the red carpet and all the perks that come with it, but what it really means to take on the story of another human being and tell it from as deep a place in your being that you can.

**COA:** That’s beautiful. I understand that early on you majored in fashion illustration. Was that your original ambition in life and if so what prompted you to change to acting?
EB: Well, that was in high school. I went to a wonderful high school in Detroit called Cass Tech. They have probably the best art department in the country at the high school level. I was a model early on. I started modeling when I was about 15 or 16. I was always a little unsure if I was going to be a model or an actress or a fashion designer. And I majored in fashion illustration. I saw during that period that I really wasn't the best illustrator in class; there were at least four people who were better than I was so I didn’t see any sense in pursuing that. I thought I should find something where I really excelled. So I earned my living as a model for about four years after I got out of school and then I decided it was time to be an actress. And I did. As soon as I made my mind up to do it, I was very lucky.

COA: And you moved to New York rather young, right?

EB: I was 19 when I moved to New York and I was modeling there until I was 23. Then one day I said, “I’ve made up my mind to be an actress. I’m going to do a Broadway play this fall. Does anybody know how to get me an audition?” Somebody did and I got the part, so I started my career with a lead on Broadway.

COA: Did you support yourself through modeling or did you have any other odd jobs while you were modeling?

EB: I supported myself as a model.

COA: That’s great. You starred in what is often called the scariest movie of all time and received an Oscar nomination for that. While preparing for *The Exorcist* and working on the set did you sense that this was going to be the scariest movie of all time and such an amazing film?

EB: I didn’t really think about it that way but it was scary, it was scary to make. It was a very wonderful experience. Billy Friedkin was such a great director. I love Linda Blair. It was movie making at its best. A very rich experience. I had no idea.

COA: *Requiem for a Dream* was also a very disturbing film and your performance there has been described as “transformative.” What’s the process of becoming such an intense character like for you?

EB: It’s hard for me to talk about that because it’s so internal. That’s such a big question. I couldn’t really answer that. It’s so interior. For instance, *Requiem for a Dream*, I used Darren Aronofsky’s mother – I used her accent and her physical way of being. But to get the emotional life of that character, Sara Goldfarb, I had to go to other places I couldn’t even talk about it now because so much of it happens in the moment.

COA: You’ve had the honor of working with screen legends, Jack Nicholson, Martin Scorsese among them. How much do you get from them in the process of making a film?
EB: Oh, it’s very collaborative, we all turn on each other’s creative juices.

COA: Are there any roles or actors that you’d like to work with in the future that you haven’t had a chance yet?

EB: I’d like to work with Marty again and I’d like to work with Christopher Plummer. That’s all I can think of at the moment.

COA: Tell me about the process of writing your memoir.

EB: It took seven years—interrupted always by acting jobs. It was very revelatory because I reread all my diaries from my whole life. I shed a lot of secrets and shame and, you know, bad feelings about myself. There were so many things that I just thought, “Just tell the story, Ellen. Just tell it the way it happened.” And I did and then I found so many people were grateful because they were carrying the same kind of secrets and shame and it helped them to hear somebody talk about them out loud.

COA: And what are you currently working on?

EB: I’ve done a couple of films. I did a picture called The Calling with Susan Sarandon. I did a picture called Enemy Way. Draft Day I just completed with Kevin Costner. And I’m in negotiations for a picture I can’t talk about until it’s real.

COA: I can’t wait to hear more about it. Thanks again for taking the time to talk with me.

EB: You’re welcome.
COA News

Rat Pack Reunion 2013 - Record Attendance and Unprecedented Funds Raised

Thank you to everyone who sponsored, attended and supported in some way our 2013 Rat Pack Reunion. With everyone’s help, we raised unprecedented funds that enable local seniors to live with dignity and independence.

We know we could not have done it without all of the support from so many people. We would like to personally thank again this years’ honorees Teri Levin, FFR (First Female Rat), Mike Papantonio, Brian Spencer and Quint Studer; DeeDee and Corbett Davis for chairing the event as well as the event committee – Lorenzo Aguilar, John B. Clark, Jennifer Cole, Carletta Howell, Ann Lemox, Kathleen Logan, Angela Moore, Phillip Morris, Jeff Nall, Michelle Ortiz-Miguez, Caron Sjöberg, Brandi Welk and Jill Wilder. Please make plans to join us on Friday, October 24th for the 2014 Rat Pack Reunión. Our thanks to Jennifer and Terry Cole for serving as next year’s chairs. If you would like to nominate someone for consideration to be one of next year’s honoree, please email Brandi Welk at bwelk@coawfla.org.

IMPACT 100 Grant

Council on Aging of West Florida was selected as the recipient of a $104,500 grant from IMPACT 100, Pensacola Bay Area, the largest IMPACT 100 group in the country. Member annual contributions of $1,000 are pooled to award grants in increments of greater than $100,000 in five focus areas to non-profit organizations in Escambia and Santa Rosa counties. Council on Aging of West Florida was selected as a recipient in the Family focus area. The Council on Aging of West Florida’s winning project, Moving Safely, addresses transportation and mobility, which are, and will continue to be, important issues facing older adults. Congratulations to Laura Garrett on writing the grant and board member Sonya Daniel on an impressive presentation to the group. The grant will enable us to purchase three vans and install handrails along the walking path at the Council’s Adult Day Health Care Center. The project will benefit seniors with dementia, veterans and middle-aged and older working caregivers served by the Adult Day Health Care Center as well as Senior Companions and Foster Grandparents who need assistance with transportation to assist homebound seniors and at-risk babies and youth in daycares, schools and detention centers. “Our project will have a multi-generational impact on our community by providing much needed assistance to elders, family

Phillip Morris and Fred Levin ready to greet guests at the High Roller Sponsor Party

And…. Special thanks to Fred Levin for hosting the High Roller Sponsor Party at his spectacular home on 18th Avenue. A great time was had by all the lucky attendees! To view and order photos from the event, please visit www.carmenjonesphotography.com
caregivers, school children, their parents and their teachers. We are very excited that our proposal was selected by the members of IMPACT 100,” said John B. Clark, President & CEO of Council on Aging of West Florida. The project will be implemented in the next few months.

Calendar and Pet Food Drive to Benefit Meals on Wheels and Pet Owners
Pine Meadow Veterinary Clinic’s fourth annual charity calendar and pet food drive for the Meals on Wheels program is in full swing.

Every year, the clinic collects pet photos and creates a fun calendar to help raise funds for this program. Many of the elderly who participate in this program have pets. At times, it can be difficult for these loving pet owners to provide a wholesome pet food meal to their pets and instead share their nutritious meals with their pets. Each year, Pine Meadow Veterinary Clinic tries to help out this program by raising funds to help get the meals to the participants and collect food to help feed their pets. You may purchase a calendar online at www.lulu.com/shop/tinalikness/pmvc-2014-charity-calendar/calendar/product-21270966.html or at the clinic, located at 550 West Nine Mile Road Pensacola, 850-477-2194. You may also drop off in-date and unopened pet food to the clinic or to the Council on Aging of West Florida, located at 875 Royce Street, Pensacola.

Panhandle Charitable Open
Since 2006, the Panhandle Charitable Open golf tournament has raised more than $310,000 to help local charities and organizations. John Peacock, president of the Panhandle Charitable Open (PCO), and PCO board members Anne and Dave Hickerson presented Council on Aging of West Florida President & CEO John B. Clark with a check for $20,000. This year’s tournament raised a record $95,000, which was donated to local charities. Next year’s event will be on Sep. 26-27, 2014. Stay tuned for new ways to get involved. www.pcogolf.org

Thanks Humana
Brandie Beauchamp, Florida Panhandle Sales Director, presented John B. Clark, President & CEO with a $2,500 check. The funds are for a grant to support this publication. Thanks Humana for supporting Coming of Age!

Volunteer Information Sessions – We Need YOU!
Council on Aging of West Florida depends on volunteers to help us serve our diverse and growing senior population. We need volunteers of all ages who are willing to give their time, experience and skills to help us carry out our mission. Join us for orientation as we discuss the importance of your role as a volunteer and get you acquainted with what we do on a daily basis.

Third Thursday of each month
875 Royce Street – Conference Room
January 16- 10 am
February 20 – 5:30 pm
March 20 – 10 am
For more information contact Betty McLeroy @ 432-1475 bmcleroy@coawfla.org.
Seniors on Parade’s “Black-n-White Ball”  
*Friday, January 24, 2014*  
Bayview Community Park, 2000 E. Lloyd Street, Pensacola  
5-9 pm  
Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church is holding their first annual “Black-n-White Ball.” Come dolled up in your best and be ready to walk the red carpet. Dinner, entertainment and door prizes. For more information, contact Anne Hughes at 850-968-0413 or Rev. Andrew Toms at 850-937-1079.

“Be Scam Smart” Stop Adult Financial Exploitation (S.A.F.E.) Workshop  
*Tuesday, January 28, 2014*  
10-11:30 am  
Santa Rosa County Auditorium, 4530 Spikes Way, Milton  
FREE  
Florida Chief Financial Officer Jeff Atwater launched Operation S.A.F.E. (Stop Adult Financial Exploitation) as a part of his On Guard for Seniors initiative to help inform, empower, and protect Florida’s seniors from financial scams and fraud. Operation S.A.F.E. aims to protect Florida’s seniors through awareness and education and, as a part of the initiative, offers free Be Scam Smart workshops provided in cities throughout the state. These workshops teach how to spot a scam, outsmart the scam artists, avoid identity theft and much more. For more information call the Santa Rosa Chamber of Commerce at 850-623-2339 or visit www.ssrcamb.com or www.myfloridacfo.com/SAFE/.

Sacred Heart Senior Services’ 15th Annual Senior Spirit Day  
*Saturday, February 22, 2014*  
8:30 am-12:30 pm  
Sacred Heart Hospital – Greenhut Auditorium  
5151 N. 9th Avenue, Pensacola  
Enjoy free health screenings, health and wellness information, and community senior resources. For more information, call 850-416-1620 or visit www.sacred-heart.org/seniorspirit.

“Swinging at the Museum” - The World Famous Glenn Miller Orchestra  
*February 11, 2014*  
7-9 pm  
National Naval Aviation Museum  
1750 Radford Blvd, Pensacola,  
Advance tickets are $30 – General Public, $25 – Foundation Members, $25 – Groups of 20 or more and $50 – Preferred Seating  
Cubi Cocktail Hour from 5:15 pm-6:45 pm  
Special Menu and Cash Bar  
The world-famous Glenn Miller Orchestra is the most popular and sought after big band in the world today. Come hear one of the greatest bands of all time as they bring unique jazz and big band sounds to the National Naval Aviation Museum. For more information, please call 850-453-2389 or visit www.navalaviationmuseum.org

Baptist Health Care Wellness Events  
Baptist Health Care offers a variety of educational events each month. By providing these wellness events, Baptist hopes to improve community health through preventive care, education and support. All seminars are free. Reservations are required. For more information or to RSVP, please call 850-469-7897.

“Understanding Alzheimer’s and Dementia”  
Presented by Megumi Maguchi, M.D., family practice, Baptist Medical Group Primary Care & Geriatrics – North Hill  
Baptist Towers Medical Meeting Rooms,  
1717 N. E Street, Avery Street Entrance  
Wednesday, Jan. 8, 11:30 am Lunch; Noon–1 pm Seminar

“Varicose Vein Treatments”  
Presented by James Lonquist, M.D., F.A.C.S., Cardiology Consultants  
Andrews Institute Athletic Performance & Research Pavilion, 1040 Gulf Breeze Parkway, Conference Room B  
Thursday, Jan. 16, 11:30 am Lunch; Noon–1 pm Seminar

“New Year, New You: Achieving a Healthy Weight”  
Presented by Monica Nall, M.D., family practice, Baptist Medical Group Family Medicine & Specialty Care Center - Pace  
Baptist Medical Park, 9400 University Parkway, Azalea Room  
Thursday, Jan. 23, 11:30 am Lunch; Noon–1 pm Seminar

Christ Church 57th Annual Antiques Show & Sale  
*January 31, February 1&2, 2014*  
Friday & Saturday - 10 am-5 pm  
Sunday - 11 am-3 pm  
Tickets - $7 per person good for all days  
*Luncheon in Church Parish Hall*  
Friday and Saturday - 11 am-1:30 pm  
$10 per person  
*Preview of the Antiques*  
Thursday, January 30, 2014  
6-8pm  
Wine & Hors d’oeuvres  
$20 per person  
The Currin Center, Downtown Pensacola Wright Street at Palafox. For more information, please call 850-432-5115 or visit www.christ-church.net. All proceeds benefit our local non-profit organizations including Council on Aging of West Florida.
WERE YOU SEEN?

...at the Rat Pack Reunion 2013

Peter & Carolyn King  Pete & Angela Moore  Brenda Penton & Mark Collins  Evan Levin & Teri Levin

Charles & Carol Carlan with Brian & Kerry Eaton  Angela & Brent Lane  Stacy English & Lisa Wragg

...at the Rat Pack Reunion High Rollers Sponsor Party

DeeDee Davis, Belle Bear & Mary Hoxeng  Becca & Joey Boles  Brian Spencer & Teri Levin

Lewis Bear Jr., Mike Papantonio, Fred Levin, Teri Levin, Brian Spencer & Pete Moore

Angela Moore, Malcolm Ballinger, Jennifer Cole & Glenys Ballinger
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By Ray and Linda Novota

Council on Aging of West Florida is a local independent 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization that has served seniors and their families since 1972. Council on Aging of West Florida helps seniors in Escambia and Santa Rosa Counties live healthy, safe and independent lives in their own familiar surroundings by providing community-based, in-home programs and services such as Meals on Wheels and Alzheimer’s respite care. For more information, call 432-1475 or visit www.coawfla.org.

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- Anterior Total Hip Surgery
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