Mountain Empire PACE Now
Enrolling: Meet Our PACE Team

Excitement, anticipation, and enthusiasm continue to build as Mountain Empire Older Citizens prepares to open the nation’s first totally rural PACE Center. PACE is an acronym for Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly. Mountain Empire PACE will provide comprehensive health and social services to frail elderly people, enabling them to live safely at home. Services will be based at the PACE Center, which will house an adult day care center, a geriatric medical clinic, and rehabilitation facilities.

In addition to primary geriatric medical care, PACE will provide comprehensive adult day care including structured recreation and exercise, meals, and ample

See PACE, on page 2

Donna Mahan, long-time Director of Parks and Recreation for the town of Big Stone Gap, will serve as the recreational therapist for Mountain Empire PACE. Donna has extensive experience in developing physical activity programs for senior citizens and will be an asset to the Mountain Empire PACE program.

Cat McClanahan (left), Mountain Empire PACE Center Manager and Dr. Gary Williams, Mountain Empire PACE Medical Director take a look at the new audiology equipment that will be utilized by PACE Center participants when the facility opens in the coming months.

See More Photos on Page 2, 7B & 27B

Alzheimer’s Support Services Section - Pages 20B - 28B
opportunities for socialization. PACE also will provide medications, medication management, dietary oversight and nutritional education. PACE either directly or indirectly will arrange for the delivery of other services including: specialty medical care, personal care, respite care, home health service, physical therapy, occupational therapy, and speech therapy. Other services that will be included in PACE are social services, transportation, and durable medical equipment as well as dental, hearing, and vision care. PACE will also cover needed labs, x-rays, and other diagnostics and when indicated provide ambulance service, emergency care, acute hospital care, and residential long-term care.

PACE services for participants will be individually planned and closely monitored by an Interdisciplinary Team (IDT). The IDT will include a physician, registered nurse, dietician, home care coordinator, pharmacist, social worker, physical therapist, occupational therapist, speech therapist, bus driver, and personal care aide.

The initial Mountain Empire PACE Center is being established in the current MEOC facility in Big Stone Gap. Renovation is almost complete and the finishing touches are being added to

Several current employees of Mountain Empire Older Citizens, Inc. will have enhanced roles in the Mountain Empire PACE program. Julia Dillon (left), a 28 year veteran of MEOC who currently serves as the Director of Family Support Services, will serve as the Home Care Coordinator for PACE. Leigh Ann Bolinskey (center) will serve as Intake and Enrollment Coordinator for PACE and Michael Wampler (right) will direct and coordinate the transportation needs of Mountain Empire PACE participants.

A new PACE Center is being constructed on property adjacent to the present MEOC campus and will be available in 2009.

Dr. Donna Adkins (left) and Tony Lawson, Director of Mountain Empire PACE are working together to develop pharmacy services for the new Mountain Empire PACE program. Dr. Adkins is a member of the faculty at the University of Appalachia College of Pharmacy. She will be the consulting pharmacist for PACE.

See STAFF, on page 4
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WALKATHON 2007
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United Way of Wise County
**Staff**

continued from page 2

the medical clinic housing three examination/treatment rooms, the physical therapy area, the day care area, and the “quiet room”, where participants will be offered an opportunity to relax and rest in an isolated tranquil environment. A new PACE Center is being constructed on property adjacent to the present MEOC campus and will be available in 2009.

Mountain Empire PACE is rapidly adding staff as a result of final Medicare and Medicaid approval on February 12, 2008. Several key personnel have recently been hired to join PACE Director, Tony Lawson, Center Manager, Cat McClanahan, R.N., and PACE Medical Director and Physician, Gary Williams, M.D.

“Mountain Empire PACE is assembling a very impressive, experienced, credentialed staff to serve our PACE participants”, noted MEOC Executive Director Marilyn Pace Maxwell. “We are extremely pleased and excited by the very high level of talent and skill possessed by each of our PACE team members. Each is totally committed to the PACE philosophy and its central emphasis on teamwork, holistic care and problem solving. The PACE philosophy is one that is totally in sync with the work, mission and vision of MEOC”, she added.

Present MEOC employee Leigh Ann Bolinskey has transferred to Mountain Empire PACE as Intake/Enrollment Coordinator. A graduate of Emory and Henry College, she first came to MEOC in 2001 in a shared position with the LENOWISCO Disabilities Service Board. In 2004, she was named MEOC’s Director of Health and Wellness with responsibilities for The Mountain Laurel Cancer Resource and Support Center. Additionally, she provided information and assistance services which included, among its many responsibilities, the editorship of The Mountain Empire News. She is a member of the Advisory Boards for the Southwest Virginia Cancer Treatment Center, The Appalachian Cancer Control Network and Virginia’s Cancer Action Plan.

Judy Free, MSW, has accepted the position of Social Worker with Mountain Empire PACE. In addition to having a Masters of Social Work degree from Virginia Commonwealth University, she is also a Licensed Clinical Social Worker. She has worked in the mental health arena and has extensive experience working as a social worker for large well respected health care systems. Judy has truly had a distinguished career and joins us after serving for over seven years as Social Work Coordinator for Wellmont Hospice and Hospice House, Bristol, Tennessee. Judy has worked very closely with MEOC staff and programs over the years and is very familiar with MEOC.

Donna Susong, R.N., will be coming on board serving as a clinical Registered Nurse and Quality Assurance Coordinator for PACE. Donna has extensive nursing experience and has worked her way up the nursing ladder. She worked as an LPN for 12 years and graduated from Lincoln Memorial University becoming a Registered Nurse in 1999. She brings her clinical and operational skills to us after a very successful career as an Emergency Room Nurse.

Donna Mahan. Donna has extensive experience in developing physical activity programs for senior citizens through her past position as Director of Parks and Recreation for the town of Big Stone Gap. She has worked collaboratively with MEOC in the past in the areas of Chronic Disease with certification in Critical Care, Advanced Cardiac Life Support, and Pediatric Advanced Life Support.

Ross Santell, Ph.D. has joined PACE as a consultant Clinical Dietitian. Dr. Santell is Dean of the Division of Health Science and Industrial Technology at Mountain Empire Community College. He has a B.S. in Dietetics and a M.S. in Clinical Dietetics from the University of Southern Mississippi as well as a Ph.D. in Nutritional Biochemistry from Michigan State University. He has taught numerous college level nutrition and dietetics courses and has published extensively in these fields. He’ll be sharing his talents with us on a part time basis as he continues to fulfill his academic responsibilities with distinction. PACE and Dr. Santell anticipate exploring the option of developing a geriatric clinical rotation for college students studying nutrition and dietetics.

Serving as Recreational Therapist for PACE will be Donna Mahan. Donna has extensive experience in developing physical activity programs for senior citizens through her past position as Director of Parks and Recreation for the town of Big Stone Gap. She has worked collaboratively with MEOC in the past in the areas of Chronic Disease.
Self-Management and her work with MEOC and The State Health Department on physical activity programming resulted in two major awards for MEOC—A 2005 Best Practices Award from The Ohio Valley/Appalachian Regional Geriatric Consortium to MEOC for “Physical Activity and The Elderly: An Evidence Based Initiative” and a 2006 Commonwealth Council on Aging's Best Practices Award in the Healthy Aging Category.

MEOC’s Director of Transportation Michael Wampler will direct and coordinate the transportation needs of PACE participants. Michael, a graduate of the University of Virginia’s College at Wise, has been an employee of MEOC for close to 14 years and has extensive knowledge of all the service and departments of MEOC as he has worked in practically all of them. He has also served with the LENOWISCO Health District as District Emergency Planner. He has previous experiences in MEOC’s Transit Department as Director of Operations. He is past Secretary of The Community Transportation Association of Virginia, past member of the State’s Medicaid Transportation Advisory Council and serves as the area’s transportation representative to the LENOWISCO Citizens Corps Council and is a member of Southwest Virginia Medical Reserve Corps.

MEOC’s Director of Family Support Services Julia Trivett Dillon, B.S.W., will serve as Home-Care Coordinator for PACE. Julia is a 28-year veteran of MEOC who arrived at work at MEOC fresh after receiving her degree from the University of Virginia’s College at Wise. Under Julia’s leadership, MEOC’s in-home services and services for family caregivers have been recognized and honored nationally by The MetLife Foundation, National Alliance For Family Caregiving, The National Association of Area Agencies on Aging and The National Council on Aging. Julia serves on the Board of Directors of the Virginia Association for Home Care and Hospice and is a member of the Advisory Committee for Virginia’s Veterans Care Center. She is a founding member of The Virginia Caregiver Coalition.

The Pharmacist for PACE—Dr. Donna Adkins— is made available through a pro bono arrangement with The University of Appalachia College of Pharmacy. Dr. Adkins is an Associate Professor of Pharmacy Practice at UACP. She earned both a BS in Pharmacy and a Doctor of Pharmacy degree from The University of Kentucky College of Pharmacy and has held a certificate as a Certified Disease State Manager in Diabetes since 1999. During her years with The Appalachian Regional Healthcare system, she helped form the Patient Medication Program which educated patients about their medications during their hospital stay and at discharge, played a key role in the development of a drug abuse awareness program which helped train managers to recognize the signs of drug abuse in employees and was actively involved in poison prevention programs for school age children and the elderly. In addition to her other PACE responsibilities, Dr. Adkins will also look at developing clinical rotations at PACE for UACP students.

Mountain Empire PACE is a team effort involving all the departments at MEOC. All MEOC staff will be very much involved in making Mountain Empire PACE a top quality, successful program. “Mountain Empire PACE is a twelve-year dream of all associated with MEOC”, said MEOC Executive Director Marilyn Pace Maxwell. “Without the committed staff in our Case Management, Transportation, Family Support Services, Information Technology, Elder Rights, Nutrition/Wellness and Administrative Services Departments, it would be impossible for MEOC ever to consider developing and operating a PACE Program, particularly in a rural area such as ours with a dispersed population. MEOC’s long history as a community-led service organization and its 34-year record of mission centered public service are further pluses in our determination to bring this remarkable model of care for the frail elderly to our area,” added Maxwell. “PACE is just one more very important step in the evolution of MEOC and its mission of providing community based models of care that will allow older people to live where they want to live—safely in their own homes in their own communities close to family and friends”, Maxwell concluded.

Enrollment of the first PACE participants began February 20, and the official start of service delivery at the PACE Center is slated for April 1, 2008. PACE participants must be 55 or older, eligible for nursing facility level care, deemed to be safe to live at home with available services, and must reside in our service area of Lee, Wise, and Scott Counties and the City of Norton. Most will be eligible for Medicare and Medicaid.

If you are interested in the PACE Program and would like more information, please contact Tony Lawson at
We’re working to bring you the best medical care in Southwest Virginia.
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Your hometown hospitals are growing better for you. From Wise County to Lee, from Norton to Pennington Gap, we’re enhancing our programs and services to meet your healthcare needs.

- Mountain View Regional Medical Center, Norton: Specializing in radiology, surgery and emergency services
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As proud members of the Wellmont Health System, we also bring you seamless access to the Tri-State region's most advanced hospitals, physicians and technologies.

Your hometown hospitals. And so much more.

Pictured: Bryan Hall, Mountain View Regional Medical Center; Dr. Sophie Zhao, Lonesome Pine Hospital; and Bruce Ellis, Lee Regional Medical Center
Dr. Harold L. Ringley, Sr.
~ In Memoriam ~
December 25, 1936 — January 26, 2008

Mountain Empire Older Citizens, Inc. was shocked and very saddened at the death of community leader, organizer and long time Coeburn Mayor Harold Ringley on January 26, 2008. Our next issue of The Mountain Empire News will include a tribute to Dr. Ringley and his invaluable support of MEOC and older citizens throughout the region. He was a dear friend to the Board and staff of MEOC and a tireless advocate for those served by MEOC.

It was always a joy to work on community projects with Dr. Ringley. His creativity, love of life and wonderful sense of humor are just a few of the traits that drew people to him. He was truly a public servant who put mission above self.

The photo above shows Harold in the middle of Coeburn with the fruits of the Coeburn Downtown Revitalization project in the background. He was key in successful efforts to renovate space in the old Lay’s Building for MEOC to use as a Community Group Respite/Adult Day Health Care Center and as a Senior Wellness center.

He will continue to be greatly missed. Our thoughts and prayers remain with his loving wife of 51 years, Alma Jean, his children and all of his family.
March is National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month

Colorectal cancer is cancer of the colon and/or rectum. It is equally common in both men and women. An estimated 153,760 cases will be diagnosed in 2007. It is projected that of these, 52,180 people will die of the illness. It effects men and women equally. It is also one of the most easily prevented cancers because it can develop from polyps that can be removed before they become cancerous.

PREVENTION
- Get regular screening tests.
- Exercise regularly and maintain a healthy weight.
- Eat a diet rich in fruits, vegetables and whole grains.
- Don't smoke and don't drink alcohol excessively.

RISK
- Men and women age 50 and older
- People with a personal or family history of colorectal cancer or benign (not cancerous) colorectal polyps
- People with a personal or family history of inflammatory bowel disease - ulcerative colitis or Crohn’s disease
- People with a family history of inherited colorectal cancer
- People who use tobacco, are obese and are sedentary

SYMPTOMS
In the early stages, there may not be any symptoms. Later, these symptoms may appear:
- Rectal bleeding and/or blood in or on the stool (bright red)
- Change in bowel habits and/or stools that are narrower than usual
- Stomach discomfort (bloating, fullness and/or cramps) and frequent gas pains
- Diarrhea, constipation or feeling that the bowel does not empty completely
- Weight loss for no apparent reason and/or constant tiredness
- Vomiting

EARLY DETECTION
Men and women at average risk should begin regular screening at age 50. If you are at greater risk, you may need to begin regular colorectal cancer screening at an earlier age.
- A colonoscopy every 10 years
- A fecal occult blood test (FOBT) or fecal immunochemical test (FIT) every year, followed by a colonoscopy if something abnormal is found
- A flexible sigmoidoscopy every 5 years, in combination with yearly FOBT or FIT

TREATMENT
- Surgery is the most common treatment.
- Chemotherapy and/or radiation therapy when the cancer has spread.

Information provided by the Prevent Cancer Foundation.

Norton WIN Center Celebrates The Holidays

Participants at the Norton WIN Center enjoyed a holiday party in early December. Pictured in their Santa hats are site participants (front row, left to right) Geneva Skorupa, Elizabeth Davidson, Hazel Ramey, Beulah Hale and Edna Ellison. Back row (left to right) Walter Dean, Dorothy Smith, Peggy Peters, Cynthia Baker, Ellie Osborne, Della Hall, Grace Boggs, Glessie Thompson, Mary Holcomb and Luther Calhoun.
MEOC Family Support Services
Staff Receives Training

The Family Support Services staff of MEOC, which includes adult day health care, homemaker, group respite, in-home respite and personal care employees, held its annual December training and holiday get together on December 8, 2007.

Staff reviewed the video “Bathing Without a Battle” which demonstrates how to create a better bathing experience for persons with Alzheimer’s Disease and related disorders. It is a production of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. The group enjoyed holiday games, a potluck luncheon and entertainment.

The following staff received recognition for perfect attendance over the past six months: Peggy Thomas, Jonesville; Sandra Catron, Gate City; Barbara Collingsworth, Blackwater; Linda Gannaway, Gate City; Pat Dockery, Wise and Frankie McPhereson, Jonesville.

Nancy Kimberlin of Jonesville was presented the 2007 Grace P. Davis Outstanding Family Support Services Employee Award at the meeting.

Sisters-in-laws and co-workers Sharon Foster, St. Charles and Leola Witt, Pennington Gap, are pictured at the staff meeting.

See More Photos on Page 10
Becky Funk, Coeburn, has a load of Christmas cheer!

Clytie Lee, Rose Hill; Gina Woodard, Pennington Gap and Betty Carter, Duffield, take a moment to pose for the photographer during the December Family Support Services staff meeting.

Lisa Whisman, R.N.
Is New Personal Care Supervisor

Please join MEOC in welcoming Lisa Whisman, R.N., to MEOC. Lisa is now directing MEOC’s Personal Care Program and comes to MEOC from Wellmont where she was the Hospice Team Leader with close to ten years experience there as a hospice nurse. We are so pleased that Lisa has joined our MEOC team. Personal care is such an important service for older persons in our region and will be a central feature of Mountain Empire PACE. Lisa lives in Keokee and in addition to being a R.N. has 12 years experience at Lonesome Pine Hospital as a certified respiratory therapist.
It’s the Most Wonderful Time of the Year!

The holiday season is the perfect opportunity for family and friends to get together and celebrate. MEOC’s Family Support Service programs, including its support groups, took advantage of this special time of year to gather together to enjoy each other’s company and share good times.

(Left) Pennington Gap Support Group met at Ruby’s Steakhouse for their holiday celebration. (Seated) Peggy Sturgill, Pennington Gap. (Standing L to R) Jean Rhoton, Blackwater, Lula Belle Reasor, Pennington Gap, Anna Faye Wilson, Pennington Gap and Lena Haight, Pennington Gap.

(Right) Hiltons Group Respite enjoys the festive decorations at the Hiltons United Methodist Church. Pictured Back Row (L to R) Deborah Bledsoe, Gate City, Rev. Will Shewey, Hiltons, Linda Gannaway, Gate City, Gaye Baker, Hiltons and Edith Woods, Hiltons. Seated (L to R) Chris Harris, Gate City, Helen Leonard, Hiltons and Richard Greear, Gate City. (Kneeling in Front) Edith Mays, Nickelsville.
Ridgecrest Manor Nursing and Rehabilitation Center, MEOC and Partners to Host Community Forum

Ridgecrest Manor Nursing and Rehabilitation Center, Mountain Empire Community College, Mountain Empire Older Citizens, Wise County Department of Social Services and BB&T will host a community education forum on March 6, 2008 from 6:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m. in the Goodloe Center, on the campus of Mountain Empire Community College in Big Stone Gap. The forum will address the following topics:

- Medicare-how it becomes active, what it covers and for how long
- Long-Term Care Insurance-how it becomes active, what it covers and for how long
- Medicaid-guidelines for applying, what it covers and for how long
- Medicare Part D - The Basics for 2008
- Advance Directives and Powers of Attorney

This event is free and open to the public. RSVP to Tricia Peters at Ridgecrest Manor at 1-276-431-2841.

Virginia Department of Social Services Announces 2008 Virginia Caregivers Grant Program

The Virginia Caregivers Grant Program, authorized by Senate Bill 910 (1999), provides for an annual grant to caregivers who provide assistance to a relative with a mental or physical impairment. This is a yearly grant payment up to $500, which will be paid on or before December 31, 2008, if funds are appropriated by the General Assembly. This application is for care that was provided to a relative in the year 2007. The grant is considered taxable income by the IRS and may be used at the caregiver's discretion. Both the caregiver and the relative receiving care must meet certain eligibility criteria.

APPLICATIONS ARE ACCEPTED BETWEEN FEBRUARY 1 AND MAY 1 OF EACH YEAR FOR CARE PROVIDED IN THE PRECEDING CALENDAR YEAR. Applications postmarked prior to February 1, 2008, and after May 1, 2008, will not be considered.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

THE CAREGIVER MUST:
- Provide unpaid care for a person who has a mental or physical impairment;
- Have an annual Virginia adjusted gross income of not more than $50,000 for a single caregiver;
- Or a Virginia adjusted gross combined income of not more than $75,000 for a married caregiver;
- Reside in the Commonwealth of Virginia;
- Provide care to the relative or person for more than six months of the calendar year.
- Provide a copy of court documentation stating that they are the legal guardian, if applicable.
- Must be related to the individual by blood or marriage.

THE PERSON RECEIVING CARE MUST:
- Require assistance with two or more activities of daily living (ADLs);
- Require assistance during more than six months of the calendar year;
- Not be receiving Medicaid-reimbursed long-term care services, except on a periodic or temporary basis; and
- Reside in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

*A licensed physician must certify that these criteria are met.

FILING DATES

Applications will be accepted from February 1, 2008 through May 1, 2008. Applications will not be returned to you for additions or corrections.

If you have not yet filed your 2007 Virginia state income tax return, please DO NOT submit the application until your taxes have been filed.

There is no appeal process, per Virginia statute.

For additional information, please call the Virginia Department of Social Services, Virginia Caregivers Grant - 24-hour hotline toll-free number at 1-877-648-2817.

To obtain an application, please call Mountain Empire Older Citizens, Inc. at (276) 523-4202 or 1-800-252-6362.
Our Home, Our Family, Our Life, Too

Don’t Leave Hometown, Family and Friends For Rehab
Come to Heritage Hall in Big Stone Gap

Ms. Dezarn recently broke her left leg and had surgery at Wellmont Lonesome Pine Hospital. She then choose Heritage Hall-Big Stone Gap for inpatient rehabilitation.

“Everyone is good to me here. Our goal is for me to walk out of here and be able to live in my home with little or no help. I know it will happen soon.”

— Ruth Dezarn

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Patty Akers - Administrator
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276-523-3000 Fax 276-523-0531
MEOC’s KinCare Program: A Bee Hive of Activity With Groups and Community Education Activities

During the past several months, KinCare was busy, as always, with many events going on. In October, Deborah Smith, Children’s Services Community Educator, facilitated four support groups and participated in the St. Charles History Day by setting up a booth at the elementary gym. During the History Day, Deborah distributed pencils, books and stickers to the children. In November, Deborah facilitated 5 support groups, participated and supported the Fall Festival event and began working on the Festival of Trees project.

In addition to these events, Deborah provided a training session at the Lee County Career Technical Center for nursing students. The session provided information, education and support regarding MEOC programs and services, especially focusing on children’s services and child abuse prevention. In December, Deborah facilitated 4 support groups and scheduled a training session for a child welfare class at UVA Wise. She provided students information and community education regarding MEOC programs and services and provided child abuse prevention information.

Fall Festival Event Held
The Fall Festival was held on November 13, 2007, at the National Guard Armory, sponsored by the local Lonesome Pine District-Sequoyah Council Boy Scouts of America, which has made this an annual project. The evening events included bingo, a cakewalk, a donation room (filled with donations of clothes, toys, books, and miscellaneous items), hot dogs, chips, cookies and drinks for everyone. Sixty-eight KinCare participants attended the event along with seventeen Healthy Families’ participants for a total of eighty-five attendees. Everyone had an enjoyable evening, taking home lots of bags of donations and bingo prizes. MEOC is so grateful to the Boy Scouts for this wonderful autumn event. It is an eagerly anticipated event by MEOC staff and KinCare families.

KinCare Families Participate in Festival of Trees
KinCare participants enjoyed making tree ornaments this year for a KinCare tree display at the Southwest Virginia Museum in Big Stone Gap. The ornament supplies were distributed to caregivers during monthly support groups. Wooden ornaments were donated by Steve Powers and were painted and decorated by KinCare participants. All the ornaments were unique and personalized by KinCare caregivers and their relative children. The hand made ornaments included a variety of angels, stars and houses, which went well with the “Homespun” tree theme. Deborah Smith, Children Services Community Educator, collected all the ornaments.

KinCare folks began work on their ornaments for the KinCare Christmas tree featured at the Southwest Museum’s Festival of Trees during November and December. Pictured are Patty Baily, KinCare Director, Deretha Baker and Iloe Collier, Kincare families and Deborah Smith, Children’s Services Community Educator.
Faces of Caregiving

MEOC has served the residents of far southwest Virginia since 1974 and operates as the region’s area agency on aging, public and specialized transportation entity and Children’s Advocacy Center.

MEOC’s mission statement includes a strong emphasis on supporting family caregivers. MEOC’s services for caregivers have received national recognition from the National Council on Aging and The MetLife Foundation/National Alliance For Family Caregiving and include: in home respite, 10 community group respite centers, emergency and overnight respite, adult day health care, caregiver support groups including an online support group, caregiver training and education, caregiver resource library, transportation, homemaker services, personal care services, home-delivered meals, personal emergency response service, care coordination, public advocacy on caregiver issues and a special technology project in which teenagers learn how to teach Alzheimer’s caregivers to use the Internet to assist them in their care giving.

In the early fall of 2007, MEOC’s Director of Family Support Services Julia Trivett Dillon acted upon a long time idea of MEOC to do a collection of photographs of area family caregivers and their loved ones.

See More Photos on Page 16
“Being a caregiver is like walking on shifting sand, you never know where the next step will lead you. All we can do is trust in God to give us the strength, courage and wisdom to walk along this path. We learned early on that it would have been nearly impossible to keep mom at home without the services provided by MEOC.”

— Dee Napier

“I never thought, in the world, I could do this but the good Lord taught me different. With the help of God and MEOC, we are making it.”

— Randy Napier

“Mom and Dad rely on me. If anyone had ever told me I would be caring for my mother, as she did for me as a child, I would have never believed it. I appreciate every day I have with them. It humbles me.”

— Pat Robbins

“I’ve never done anything like this before in my life, it is hard to get used to. It makes me grateful and appreciative of each day. Each day is different. It has been an humbling experience.”

— Milford Thacker

See More Photos on Page 17
Alberta Mitchell and Mother, Illinoise Mitchell, Big Stone Gap

“This experience has afforded me an opportunity to do for my mother and give back to her for all she has done for me in my life. It makes me feel so blessed to have her for a mother, she is so precious to me!”

— Alberta Mitchell

Lillian Artrip and Daughter, Jennifer Beverly, Norton

“I consider it a privilege to be able to give back a small portion of all that Mama has given me.”

— Jennifer Beverly

Clara Hartsock and Husband, Lonnie Hartsock, Nickelsville

“Now, in my later life, my husband is my whole life. Without him, I don’t know what I would do.”

— Clara Hartsock

See More Photos on Page 18
Ben Anderson and Mother, Joyce Stallard, Coeburn

“As a caregiver, I am so appreciative for the adult day health care and transportation provided by MEOC. Ben’s quality of life is much better because of these services. Adult day health care gives me time to take care of my own needs and I’m a better caregiver because of it.”

— Joyce Stallard

Mary Schauer and Mother, Ina Duff, Pennington Gap

“My mother is my best friend.”
— Mary Schauer

Anson Evans and Wife, Buena Evans, Coeburn

“Being the caregiver for Anson Evans was an easy job. He never complained, he was always cooperative and always had a good sense of humor. He always had a joke. When you asked him how he was doing, he would say, “I’m alive so I must be ok.” Anson was blessed to have the devoted care of Buena, his wife of 58 years. Together, they are considered spiritual giants at Midway Church were Anson served as a deacon for twenty years. On September 29, 2007, Anson went home to be with the Lord. He is greatly missed by his family, community and church.

— Written by: Alisa and Amanda Evans daughter-in-law and granddaughter of Anson

See More Photos on Page 31
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Is Your Income Below $12,250
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YOU WILL RECEIVE:
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- A ride to your volunteer site
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- Excess liability insurance
- And especially, the satisfaction in knowing you are making a difference in the life of a child.

If You Are Interested, Please Call:
Jennifer Spangler
(276) 523-4202
News from MEOC Children’s Services

NCA net Grant Award To MEOC

The Southwest Virginia Children’s Advocacy Center (CAC) of MEOC has received a grant from the Southern Regional Children’s Advocacy Center to continue to participate in monthly videoconferences. The focus for the center this year is forensic interview peer review. The videoconferences link the MEOC CAC with other CACs nationwide where each month a different CAC presents a case for discussion. The Southwest Virginia CAC provided the case presentation for December 2007. This offers the interviewer and the center feedback from other CAC staff from across the nation. In addition to the peer review calls, education calls are offered periodically. The education calls include national experts in the child abuse field and offer local agency providers with an opportunity to participate in live training via videoconference. Notices will be sent to local agency providers and for information regarding NCA net training please call Janie Dockery @ 276-5823-4202.

Healthy Families News

Healthy Families conducted its Parent Education Group for 2007 on November 14th. Groups are held for Healthy Families participants six times each year and focus on a variety of parenting topics as well as some fun activities and lunch.

The November group meeting offered parents information on pregnancy prevention, sexually transmitted diseases, and how to be sexually responsible. Prevention Specialist Nora Murphy from Wise County Health Department presented the information to the parents. Ms. Murphy provided time for the parents to ask questions and give comments during the two-hour session. The parents left with an increased awareness about the group topics as well as literature for future reference.

KinCare

continued from page 14

trimmed and worked tirelessly with the KinCare participants to ensure the ornaments were completed by the deadline.

Deborah and Patty Bailey, KinCare Director, recruited a team of support group members to help decorate the tree and they all had a good time putting the tree together. The tree was beautiful and was a success! One KinCare group, as part of a special outing, visited the museum as a group to see the KinCare tree and all the other beautiful trees. It is hoped that the KinCare program will be able to participate in the Festival of Trees event again next year.

Toys For Tots Benefits Local Families

The KinCare program worked with Angela Hopson with the U.S. Marines Christmas Project this year. Angela also works very hard with the annual Fall Festival sponsored by the Boy Scouts to make sure that KinCare families will enjoy a super evening of fun and fellowship. The Christmas project was for families who were eligible for food stamps, TANF, and free or reduced lunches at school. The KinCare director, Patty Bailey, assisted many families with completing the application and obtaining needed verification to ensure that as many families eligible could be served. Families picked up their Christmas items on December 15, 2007 at the Food City warehouse. All the gifts donated by the community were new and were very much appreciated by the families.

Holiday For Kids Assists 226 Children

The Holiday For Kids project received many donations from the community, MEOC staff and Board members and MEOC friends to purchase $25 gift cards for KinCare children, Healthy Families children and the children served by The Children’s Advocacy Center. We would like to thank everyone who supported the Holiday For Kids project this year, making the project a success again.

There were 181 KinCare children, 26 CAC children, and 18 Healthy Families children participating in MEOC’s Holiday For Kids Project. Some KinCare families received their gift cards at scheduled support groups, CAC families received their cards during scheduled appointments, and Healthy Families’ participants received their gift cards during scheduled home visits.

The Transit Department delivered approximately 7 gift cards to families due to illness or lack of transportation. On December 19, 60 families visited MEOC to receive their gift cards. The day was a good opportunity to meet with newer KinCare families, greet familiar faces, and to wish families the happiest of holidays. Referrals were also made to other organizations for clothing or other needed items. The Community Educator was also able to distribute approximately 100 donated VHS movies and books to KinCare families during support group/gift card distribution. New books, purchased through the First Books program, were distributed to all Healthy Families participants to be shared with their child.
No Wrong Door Advisory Council Underway

On October 1, 2007, Mountain Empire Older Citizens, Inc., entered into a contract with the Virginia Department for the Aging to become one of six area agencies on aging piloting Virginia’s exciting new, cutting-edge initiative dubbed “No Wrong Door.” No Wrong Door is the Commonwealth of Virginia’s approach to one-stop access for adult health and human services. The vision of the No Wrong Door System (NWD) is to have Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRC) in every community where individuals can access information on the full range of long-term support options and entry to public long-term support programs and benefits with the goal that older adults, adults with disabilities, and family caregivers will know where to turn for long-term support information, assistance, and services.

ADRC’s are part of a nationwide effort by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services and The Administration on Aging to restructure services and supports for older adults and younger persons with disabilities designed to enhance access to community living. An ADRC is a network of providers that has agreed to work as part of the No Wrong Door system of long-term care to provide a coordinated system for providing (a) comprehensive information on available public and private long-term care programs, options, and resources; (b) personal counseling to assist individuals in assessing their existing or anticipated long-term care needs, and developing and implementing a plan for long-term care designed to meet their specific needs and circumstances; and (c) consumer access to the range of publicly supported long-term care programs for which consumers may be eligible; thus, serving as a convenient point of entry for such programs.

Mountain Empire Older Citizens, Inc., and The Junction Center for Independent Living are partnering to develop this opportunity for our region. No Wrong Door is an exciting new way of providing service through a virtual single point-of-entry system powered by web-based technology. With the goal of making sure that southwest Virginia is a full partner in this new initiative, the No Wrong Door Advisory Council, comprised of agencies from across the Lenowisco Planning District met on January 28th in Big Stone Gap. The Advisory Council was pleased that the Virginia Department for the Aging’s No Wrong Door Coordinator Molly Huffstetler was an important part of the day’s agenda.
(Left) Left to right, MEOC Care Coordination Director Judy Miller, Norton Department of Social Services Adult Services Worker Pam Stewart, Norton Department of Social Services Director Roger Ramey, and Wise County Department of Social Services’ Adult Protective Services Supervisor Vickie Hall.

(Right) Left to right, MEOC Elder Rights Director Margaret Sturgill, MEOC Executive Director Marilyn Pace Maxwell, Frontier Health’s Sharon Taylor, Brain Injury Services of Southwest Virginia case manager Tracie Hall, and Virginia Department for the Aging’s No Wrong Door Coordinator Molly Huffstetler.

(Below) Left to right, MEOC Transit Director Michael Wampler, Lenowisco Health District R.N. Donna Miller, MEOC Nutrition & Wellness Director Nancy Smith and MEOC Nutrition and Wellness Administrative Assistant Debbie Sanders.
Annual Statewide Ombudsman Training Held in Richmond

The annual statewide long-term care ombudsman training was held November 7-9 in Richmond, Virginia. More than 30 ombudsman and volunteer ombudsmen were in attendance including Debbie Collier, MEOC’s Long Term Care Ombudsman. The training is required yearly for all LTC ombudsmen and is directed by Virginia’s LTC Ombudsman Joani Latimer and the Assistant LTC State Ombudsman Gail Shirley.

Topics included: Assessing and Documenting for Risk of Harm to Self and Others, Working with Needs and Challenges of a Changing Resident Population, Working with Your most Challenging Residents and Family Members, Advocacy, and Dementia is not a Divide. Speakers included Linda Nablo, Commissioner for the Virginia Department for the Aging; G. Patrick Jackson, Geriatric Services Coordinator Hampton-Newport News Community Services Board; Steve Herrick, Director Piedmont Geriatric Hospital; Kathy Prior, Elder Law Specialist; Deborah Hamilton and James Getz with the Baltimore City Commission on Aging and Retirement Education; Lindsay Slaughter Piedmont Geriatric Hospital; and Mary Ann Johnson, Director of the Alzheimer’s Association, Greater Richmond Chapter.

Why Should You Care About Health Care Fraud, Errors, and Abuse?

Health care fraud is not just about the government. People can get sick, lose benefits, lose money, and get stuck with bad equipment or other things they don’t need. The Medicare and Medicaid programs provide security for all of us. We want to ensure these programs will have money to operate and to provide good, quality health care for you and future generations. Although the vast majority of health care providers are honest, the activities of the remaining few result in wasted funds and a loss of quality of care for yourself and others.

Health Care Fraud Costs!

In the United States, we lose as much as $80 - $100 billion each year to health care fraud and errors. Medicare lost more than $16 billion dollars in 2004. Consumers lose as much as $10 billion

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MOUNTAIN EMPIRE NEWS
Page 24

Emergency Fuel Program Receives Donation

Giles “Smoky” Combs, Austin Powder Location Manager, recently presented a donation on behalf of Austin Powder to MEOC’s Emergency Fuel Fund. MEOC Care Coordination Director Judy Miller, left, and MEOC Executive Director Marilyn Maxwell, right, received the donation. Many thanks to Austin Powder and to all the businesses, individuals, churches and other organizations who support this fund that is so important to the area’s older citizens on fixed incomes.

Patrol

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dollars a year.

What is Fraud and Abuse?
Fraud is an intentional deception or misrepresentation which could result in unauthorized benefit. Abuse is incidents or practices inconsistent with sound medical or business practices.

Who Might Commit Health Care Fraud?
Fraud and abuse can occur in these areas:
• Hospitals
• Nursing Homes
• Home Health Services
• Physician’s Offices
• Durable Medical Equipment (DME)
• Medical Equipment Suppliers
• Pharmacies

• Hospice Services
• Laboratories
• Transportation Providers

SMP Accomplishments
Since 1997, the Senior Medicare Program has reached out to more than 1.8 million seniors / consumers and played a role in the recovery or savings of more than $100 million dollars and saved the Medicare program $3.9 million. Last year alone, Medicare lost $12.9 BILLION to error, fraud and abuse. In 1997, when the SMP program began, Medicare was losing 24 billion.

In 2003, the SMP projects documented and investigated nearly 15,000 consumer complaints and inquiries, trained more than 45,000 volunteers and conducted more than 134,000 media and community events.

To report suspected healthcare fraud or abuse, contact Mountain Empire Older Citizens or Susan Johnson, Project Manager, at the Virginia Association of Area Agencies on Aging at (804) 644-5628 or 1-800-938-8885
Emergency Fuel Fund Donation Honors Local Children

Christmas of 2007 was as much about giving as receiving for Logan and Ryan Hobbs and Melodee and Mason Deboard of Wise. At the suggestion of grandparents Thomas and Wanda Countiss, each of the children agreed to sacrifice $50 of their usual Christmas money in exchange for a $200 gift made in their honor to the MEOC Emergency Fuel Fund. Pictured left to right are: Logan, age 12; Ryan, age 14; Melodee, age 12 and in the center, Mason, age 7.

All are enrolled in the Norton City Schools where students learn about the MEOC Emergency Fuel Fund each year during the First Hundred Days of School Celebration when thousands of pennies and coins of all denominations are collected by students for the Emergency Fuel Fund.

Special THANKS to Logan, Ryan, Melodee and Mason for this special gift. Your generosity and caring at Christmas time is helping keep a frail older person warm this winter.

MECC Students Support Holiday Fundraising Campaign for Home Delivered Meals

For the fourth year in a row, Mountain Empire Community College students, inspired by teacher, Mike Strouth, chose to celebrate the Holidays by supporting “Sharing our Daily Bread”, the Mountain Empire Older Citizens, Inc. fundraising initiative for Home Delivered Meals.

Strouth and students enrolled in his United States History and Western Civilization Classes, collected money and made personal contributions for “Sharing our Daily Bread” during November and December. At the close of Fall semester, $770.00 was presented to MEOC for Home Delivered Meals as a result of this student project.

Congratulations and many thanks MECC History students! Your kindness and your generosity truly make a difference for frail older citizens in need of Home Delivered Meals. A special thanks goes as well to long time MEOC supporter Professor Mike Strouth.

MECC History students from the classes who participated are pictured on Page 26. Thank you to Professor Mike Strouth and all of his wonderful History students.
(Left) Pictured are Rachael Mitchell, Tana Vicars, Jacob Jones, Ethan Stewart, Shannon Robbins, Paige Horton, Whitney C. Harris, Justin Wingler, Jordan Begley, Courtney Adkins and Holly Mullins.


(Left) Pictured are Randall Maddle, Keisha Perry, Marshall McMurray, Jonathan Belcher, Megan Seale, Trey Power, Ariel Cornett, Aaron Young, Megan Moore, Sheila Mullins, Gabe Mullins, Amanda Dingus, Brittany Rupert, John Carroll, Jessie Fleenor, Danielle Shackelford and Mahala Slemp.
Now, your telephone is a nurse call button.

At Wellmont Nurse Connection, our nursing professionals are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, to take your phone calls. We’ll answer your questions, give you health information and even refer you to a doctor. Caring advice from a registered nurse is just a phone call away.

1-877-230-NURSE
Many Thanks to Our Contributors

Sharing Our Daily Bread

Wise Baptist Church Women On Mission ............ Wise
Steven Hooks ............................... Big Stone Gap
McGraw-Hill Companies ................. Princeton, New Jersey
Dine Mullins ............................... Coeburn
Jerome Wright ......................... Keokee
Zelma Aichel ......................... Big Stone Gap
Sharon Foster ....................... St. Charles
Johnny Patterson .................. Big Stone Gap
Michael Pease ..................... Clinchport
Hazel Ramey .............................. Norton
Nancy Smith ................................. Big Stone Gap
Dr. Theresa Dunton ................. Big Stone Gap
Shirley Meade ...................... Pound
Sylvia Mullins ...................... Big Stone Gap
First Church of God ............... Norton
George Vail ............................. Duffield
First Christian Church Mission Fund .......... Big Stone Gap
George and Nancy Culbertson ....... Wise
Trinity United Methodist Church ........ Big Stone Gap
Ruby Nell Cawood .................. Jonesville
Charlotte Brooks ..................... Jonesville
Ina Witt .................................. Big Stone Gap
Student Government Association
   Powell Valley High School .......... Big Stone Gap
Flatwoods United Methodist Church ...... Pennington Gap
Nannie Bellamy ................ Big Stone Gap
Linda Lawson ............... Dandridge, Tennessee
Hospice Support Services .......... Appalachia
Jeanne Callaway ..................... Norton
Thelma Gilley ...................... Big Stone Gap
Richard Peake .................. Galveston, Texas
Norton Employer Advisory Committee ...... Norton
Scott Coffey ............................. Wise
Joyce Winston ..................... Norton
Rosa Chambers ..................... Duffield
Bunny Caro-Justin ................. Richmond
The Coalfield Progress ................. Norton
Mike Strouth & MECC Students .......... Big Stone Gap
Deep Springs Adult
   Sunday School Class .......... Big Stone Gap
Charles L. Hibbits ..................... Wise
Norton Community Hospital Auxiliary ...... Norton
Gauleville Presbyterian Church .......... Wise
Pound Veterinary Hospital ................. Pound
Rose Hill Christian Church .............. Rose Hill
Galilee Christian Church .......... Jonesville
Joan Moore ........................... Carrollton, Kentucky
Powell Valley National Bank .......... Jonesville
Rosa Chambers ..................... Duffield
Amarylis C. Rolien .................. Wise
Michael and Kimberley Dorton .......... Duffield
Pyles Memorial Church ................. Pound
Phylis Hamilton
   In Memory of George Dalton .......... Big Stone Gap
Family Drug, Inc. ................. Big Stone Gap
Jeanne Callaway ........................ Norton
Barbara Asher .......................... Wise
Beulah Rasnick ..................... Wise
Lula Bell Reasor ..................... Pennington Gap
Janet Hampton ...................... Big Stone Gap
Wise County Industrial Development Authority .......... .Wise
Patricia McCracken ................. Norton
Cumberland Resources Corporation ...... Abingdon
Sally Hamer ............................ Abingdon
Norma Burke ............... Alpena, Michigan
The Church of the Good Shepherd ...... Norton
Tony Lawson ............................ Jonesville
Pat Stallard ............................. Norton
Theresa A. Mullins ................. Big Stone Gap
The Lions Club of Big Stone Gap, Inc. ...... Big Stone Gap
Lola Sanders ...................... Big Stone Gap
BB&T ........................................ Wise
Ruth Wells ................................. Wise
Maggie Christian ..................... St. Paul

Emergency Fuel Fund

Maxie Collins
   In Memory of Myrtle Collins .......... Appalachia
Mary E. Clasby
   In Memory of Myrtle Collins .......... Big Stone Gap
Rita Jessee Family
   In Memory of Myrtle Collins .......... Appalachia
Pocahontas Rebekah Lodge 24 ............ Coeburn
Cindy Robinette .................. East Stone Gap
Ruby Gouge ............................ Coeburn
Betty Bailey ............................. Ewing

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Zelma Aichel ........................................ Wise
Linda Begley ........................................ Big Stone Gap
Betty Carter ........................................ Duffield
Gerald Compton ..................................... Gate City
Julia Dillon .......................................... Big Stone Gap
Sharon Foster ....................................... St. Charles
Kim Gibson ......................................... Norton
Dennis Horton ...................................... Weber City
Michael Pease ...................................... Fairview
Hazel Ramey ........................................ Norton
Jean Rhoton ........................................ Blackwater
Teresa Shoop ....................................... Big Stone Gap
Bob Tipton .......................................... Gate City
Christ Lutheran Church ......................... Wise
Southwest VA Chapter of
Thrivent for Lutherans ......................... Bluefield, West Virginia
Margie Schoenewald In honor of Jo Stewart .... Pound
Carrie Stone ........................................ Gate City
First Church of God .............................. Norton
Mary Hampton Davis
In Memory of Gregory S. Davis ............... Norton
Marilyn & Bill Maxwell
In Memory of Esther Congo .................... Norton
Lena S. Haight
In Memory of Earl Evans ....................... Pennington Gap
Lona W. Roberts
In Memory of Esther Congo .................... Wise
Rish Equipment Company ...................... Bluefield, West Virginia
The King's Highway Temple, Inc ............. Kingsport, Tennessee
West Norton Baptist Church .................... Norton
Past Matrons & Past Patrons of Eastern Star . Coeburn
Commonwealth of VA Campaign .............. Richmond
Norton Employer Advisory Committee ....... Norton
Angea L. Kinsler .................................... Big Stone Gap
Lone Mountain Processing, Inc. .............. Saint Charles
Loretta Bolling ...................................... Wise
Art and Susan Vanzee ............................. Pennington Gap
Maxim Engineering, Inc. ....................... Coeburn
Randy and Lisa Lawson ......................... Wise
Ewing Brethren Church Sunday School ...... Ewing
Walter Rivers ...................................... Big Stone Gap
Lillian Hood ........................................ Big Stone Gap
Rose Horne ......................................... Coeburn

James Roger Jones ................................ Wise
Mary E. Clasby
In Memory of David Hurd ..................... Big Stone Gap
Frances Holbrook ................................ New York, New York
Anna Holland ...................................... Kingsport, Tennessee
Italy Vanover ...................................... Pound
Helen Sutherland ................................ Pound
Jack and Marsha Tolbert ...................... Wise
East Stone Gap
United Methodist Women ...................... East Stone Gap
Kenneth and Judy Hill ......................... Coeburn
The Office Place, Inc. ......................... Abingdon
Imboden United Methodist Church .......... Imboden
Charles and Chollie Absher ................... Big Stone Gap
Joyce Winston ..................................... Norton
Thomas Village Baptist Church, Inc. ....... Duffield
Tuck Mapping Solutions, Inc. ............... Big Stone Gap
Gibbs Foundation ................................. Charlotte, North Carolina
Pyles Memorial Church ......................... Pound
Warren and Alice Seabolt ..................... Jonesville
Appalachia Elementary School/SCA .......... Appalachia
Hazel L. Marcum ................................ Appalachian
Nancy Smith ........................................ Big Stone Gap
United Way of Roanoke Valley, Inc. ....... Roanoke
June Delp ............................................ Big Stone Gap
Don and Evelyn Cassell ....................... Chattanooga, Tennessee
Romak Construction Inc. ....................... Wise
Wolfe Williams & Rutherford ................. Norton
Thomas and Wanda Countiss ................. Wise
United Way of Smyth County, Inc. ........ Marion
George and Wanda Scott ...................... Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
Glenn Skinner ...................................... Big Stone Gap
David and Bernita Jervis ..................... Big Stone Gap
Coeburn United Methodist Church .......... Coeburn
Mary’s Chapel Church ......................... Coeburn
Stephen and Valerie Lawson ................. Wise
Artesian Baptist Church ....................... Big Stone Gap
Deep Springs Adult
Sunday School Class ............................ Big Stone Gap
Preceptor Alpha Omega XP-2623 ............ Norton
Bolling Printing Company, Inc. .............. Pound
Norton Community Hospital Auxiliary .... Norton

Care Coordination
Ann Midkiff ........................................ Arlington, Texas
Marilyn Maxwell .................................... Norton

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Maggie Christian ......................... .Saint Paul
Margaret Sturgill .......................... .Pound
Irma Snodgrass ............................ .Weber City
Cathy McClanahan ....................... .Big Stone Gap
Judy Miller .................................. .Norton
Patty Bailey ................................. .Big Stone Gap
Mike Henson ................................. .Pennington Gap
Tony Lawson ................................ .Jonesville

Respite

Mr. & Mrs. Willie Brickey .................. .Weber City
Thelma and Larry Ross ................. .Dearborn Heights, Michigan
Betty M. Elkins ............................ .Coeburn
Nancy Scott ................................ .Big Stone Gap

Healthy Families

Patty W. Cooper ............................. .Big Stone Gap

Homemaker

Mary Tate & Duane Tate Akridge ........ .East Stone Gap
Betty Elkins ................................. .Coeburn
Wayne Moore ................................. .Jonesville

KinCare

Alberta Mitchell ............................ .Big Stone Gap
Doris Gibson ................................ .Big Stone Gap
Lee Farmers Cooperative Inc. .......... .Jonesville
AARP of VA-BSG Chapter No. 4455 .... .Wise
Lee Bank & Trust Company .............. .Pennington Gap
Family Drug, Inc. ......................... .Big Stone Gap
Myers Home Center, Inc. ............... .Jonesville
Mike Henson ................................. .Pennington Gap
Patty Bailey ................................ .Big Stone Gap
Judy Miller .................................. .Norton
Cathy McClanahan ......................... .Big Stone Gap
Irma Snodgrass ............................. .Weber City
Margaret Sturgill ......................... .Pound
Maggie Christian ........................... .Saint Paul
Dennis Horton ............................... .Weber City
Tony Lawson ................................ .Jonesville
Lisa Odle .................................... .Big Stone Gap
Teresa Shoop ................................. .Big Stone Gap
Janie Dockery ............................... .Big Stone Gap
Julia Dillon ................................. .Big Stone Gap
AARP of VA- Local Chapter No. 4455 .... .Wise
Telemed ....................................... .Atlanta, Georgia
Karen Gusler ................................ .Norton
Pat McCracken .............................. .Norton
Bridget McCoo ............................... .Big Stone Gap
Chuck Stapleton ............................ .Big Stone Gap

Mountain Empire News

Patricia Bailey .............................. .Big Stone Gap
Kathi Kiser .................................. .Kingsport, Tennessee
Alpha Services .............................. .Abingdon
Thompson & Litton ......................... .Wise
Norton Employer Advisory Committee ... .Norton
Marilyn Pace Maxwell .................... .Norton
Southern Appalachian Ronald McDonald

Norton Community Hospital Auxiliary ... .Norton

Children’s Advocacy Center

Norton Community Hospital Auxiliary ... .Norton

Mountain Laurel Cancer Center

Ruben Lovell Memorial Fund

Steve and Jackie Maddox .................. .Big Stone Gap
Lucille S. Middleton ........................ .Jonesville
Linda Begley ................................. .Big Stone Gap
Kim Gibson .................................. .Norton
Leigh Ann Bolinskey ........................
In honor of Kim Gibson .................... .Big Stone Gap
Leigh Ann Bolinskey ...................... .Big Stone Gap
In honor of Linda Begley .................. .Big Stone Gap
Judy Miller .................................. .Norton
Marilyn Pace Maxwell .................... .Norton
Karen Watkins .............................. .East Stone Gap

Alzheimer’s Family Support Services

Billie and Norma Burke .................... .Alpena, Michigan
Lena S. Haight ............................... .Pennington Gap
Robert and Victoria Smith ................ .Big Stone Gap
Freewill Baptist Family Ministries .... .Greeneville, Tennessee
Dee and Randy Napier and Family
In Memory of Florida Bordelon ........... .Pennington Gap

Mountain Empire PACE

Linda and David Kocher .................... .Big Stone Gap
who were served by MEOC. Her interest had been rekindled when she was participating in a meeting of The Virginia Caregiver’s Coalition and learned that the Adult Day Care Center of Central Virginia had done a photography project with their participants.

Julia enlisted the assistance of MEOC’s Director of Administrative Services Ray Moore, a very talented amateur photographer, as part of the project. Together they made arrangements with 12 families who had agreed to participate in the project. Photographs, all in color, were made at a variety of locations, dependent on the wishes of the caregiver. Some were made in the home; some were made at adult day health care and community group respite centers while others were made in favorite outdoor locales. The caregivers participating were from throughout Lee, Wise, Scott Counties and the City of Norton. Their loved ones received a variety of community-based services from MEOC. Some caregivers requested that the photograph include MEOC’s in-home worker saying that the relationship between the geriatric aide and the care recipient was so close that it seemed more like the aide was a family member. Each caregiver received a framed copy of their photograph.

Each caregiver was asked to write a statement in response to the question: “What has the caregiving experience meant to you?” The statements were featured next to the appropriate photographs.

MEOC unveiled the photographs for the first time at its 18th Annual Alzheimer’s Seminar in November as part of its local efforts to recognize National Family Caregivers Month and National Alzheimer’s Disease Awareness Month. The photo display has also been featured at the various libraries in The Lonesome Pine Regional Library System and at The Oxbow Health and Human Services Center in St. Paul. It can be viewed online at www.alzpossible.org where it is featured by Virginia’s Alzheimer’s and Related Disorders Commission.

Faces

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Dan Stanley and Wife, Betty Stanley, Gate City

“My husband helped me take care of all my family. We did the best we could for my mother, brother and sister. I told him if he ever needed help or care I would always be there for him because he has always been there for me.”

— Betty Stanley

— Nancy Chisenhall
MEOC 2008 Walkathon Set for May 4

It seems impossible that in less than three short months, Mountain Empire Older Citizens will be having its annual walkathon—the largest fundraiser for the Emergency Fuel Fund for the Elderly.

Please consider this as your personal invitation to come join us on Sunday, May 4, 2008 for a fun-filled day of helping older people in our community. Folks of all ages from our area will gather at Powell Valley High School to complete a 10 kilometer walk (6.2 miles) with the goal of raising $150,000. Every cent raised will be used next winter to help our older friends and neighbors in the City of Norton and the counties of Wise, Lee and Scott. This will be our 32nd Annual Walkathon.

Too many of our elderly friends and neighbors are faced with the no-win situation of deciding whether to pay for fuel, food, or medicine and their small checks won’t stretch far enough to handle all their basic needs. Mountain Empire Older Citizens, Inc. chose to do something to help 34 years ago when our dear friend Esther Congo took up a collection and brought it to us to purchase heating fuel for older people in need.

MEOC has relied on the community to assist us in raising money for the Emergency Fuel Fund for the Elderly throughout its 34-year history. We are so grateful that the community has never failed to respond when it is asked for help.

Without the support of individuals, churches, schools, civic clubs and business organizations, the nearly 700 frail individuals assisted so far this winter through the Emergency Fuel Fund would have had no place to turn for help when they desperately needed it.

The annual walkathon is the largest fundraiser for the Emergency Fuel Fund. We promise you’ll have an enjoyable, personally fulfilling day of fellowship with hundreds of others from throughout the region. You can complete the walk at your own pace and when you’re finished, there will be a celebration picnic of hamburgers, baked beans and all the trimmings. The route is safe for people of all ages; it is fully paved and traffic free.

We desperately need to raise at least $150,000 in order to meet the requests next winter. Call us at 1-800-252-6362 or 523-4202 and we’ll send your sponsor forms right out to you.

Come join us on Sunday, May 4, 2008.

People of all ages participate in the annual MEOC Walkathon that benefits the Emergency Fuel Fund for the Elderly. Join us Sunday, May 4, at Powell Valley High School for our 32nd annual Walkathon.

The six kindergarten classes at Wise Primary School celebrated their 100th day of school by doing some very good things for the community. The students collected $279.88 for MEOC’s Emergency Fuel Fund for the Elderly. They also collected 381 cans of food for the Wise County Food Bank. Thanks so much, kindergarten students, for caring about people in your community!