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NEWSLINES

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Division of Aging and Community Services, Department of Health & Senior Services

Wellness

Telephone Use with Hearing Aids By Dr. Suzanne McCorry

During the holidays, we have the opportunity to spend time with our family and friends who we might not get to see often throughout the rest of the year. Why not enhance your daily communication with those close to you by improving hearing ability on the telephone? Understanding speech on the phone is a significant area of difficulty for the majority of individuals with hearing loss.

Our ability to understand speech is augmented by the cues provided by looking at someone's face when they are talking and by binaural listening (hearing with two ears). Communication via the telephone can be extremely difficult due to the loss of visual cues and relying on only one ear. In the past, individuals with hearing aids may have experienced whistling when attempting to use the telephone in conjunction with their hearing aid. The technology available today allows for improved telephone communication.

Hearing aids can now come equipped with a telecoil to improve telephone use. The telecoil circuit allows for electromagnetic communication between the telephone and the hearing aid by positioning them appropriately close

together - a program button can be provided on the hearing aid if an individual has difficulty with maintaining the position of the phone. Even more exciting ... some of the hearing aid manufacturers have recently developed technology that allows the hearing aid to automatically send the telephone response to both hearing aids simultaneously to regain the binaural listening, which is lost with traditional telephone use. In addition, many hearing aids are Bluetooth compatible to allow for hands-free cell phone use without having to take out the hearing aids to use a hands-free Bluetooth device for the cell phone while driving. Individuals with a more severe degree of hearing loss may require use of a captioned telephone or phone relay service. Captioned telephones have a visual display of every word that the person you are communicating with to improve your ability to understand speech on the phone. IP Relay Service is available for individuals who use American Sign Language as their primary means of communication to allow for telephone communication. Remember to enjoy your holiday season and keep in touch with the ones you love!

Suzanne McCorry is Doctor of Audiology at Coastal Ear, Nose and Throat in Neptune, NJ, and can be contacted at 732-280-7855; sbmccorry@coastalhearing.com; <http://www.coastalhearing.com>

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OF THE DIVISION ON AGING, DISABILITIES AND VETERAN SERVICES

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County Veteran Service Office (CVSO)

By Tom Pivinski

Monmouth County Freeholder Amy Mallet officially opened a new County Veteran Service Office on November 10, 2010 in conjunction with the national celebration of Veterans Day. Freeholder Mallet has long recognized a growing need for support on the part of the veterans and their families in the County. As a result, she collaborated with the Department of Human Services and arranged to expand the Office on Disabilities to include a CVSO.

All veteran service organizations (VSO) are advocates guiding and assisting all U.S. veterans, Armed Forces members, their dependents and survivors in obtaining hard earned benefit programs. However, what makes the CVSO so important and special is that the County Veteran Services Officer is a county employee who manages and coordi-

nates the delivery of veteran benefits, both federal and state, to eligible recipients.

From now on, every veteran in Monmouth County will have a representative who will assist them in navigating the vast and often intimidating bureaucracy of the Veterans Administration (VA). These representatives are Sue Moleon and Debbie Bottomley who have been trained and prepared for this new responsibility by the National Association of County Veteran Service Offices at a 5 day training seminar. Both of them also staff the county Office on Disabilities.

Monmouth County has the 3rd largest population of veterans in New Jersey at 37,930 as of September, 2009. Many of them are seniors and persons with disabilities so the inclusion of the CVSO in the Office on Aging, Disabilities and Veterans Interment is

most appropriate. Freeholder Mallet



Milton Ziment, a World War II veteran who also serves on the Advisory Council of the Office on Aging, at the opening ceremony for the new CVSO.

also introduced a resolution renaming the Office of Veterans' Interment to the Office of Veteran Services.

The CVSO will advocate for veterans and their families and aggressively pursue all federal and state benefits and entitlements on their behalf. They will assist veterans in re-opening existing claims and making new claims for service related disability compensations and non-service related disability pensions.

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*Happy Holidays
from the staff of the
Division on Aging,
Disabilities and
Veteran Services*

There will be a plethora of potential free benefits offered to the veterans; counseling for individuals, families, and couples, readjustment counseling services to combat veterans and their families, alcohol and drug assessment, Post Traumatic Stress

Disorder (PTSD) and Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) counseling, employment counseling and guidance, Agent Orange Information and Referral, and bereavement counseling. All contacts with the CVSO will be supportive and completely confidential.

The CVSO is located at the Office on Aging at 21 Main and Court Center and their telephone number is... **732-683-8675.**

The National Family Caregiver Support Program

By Colleen Smith

The U.S. Administration on Aging is sponsoring a year long celebration to commemorate the 10th anniversary



Colleen Smith, Caregiver Specialist and Freeholder Amy Mallet at the Caregiver Retreat on November 6th.

of the National Family Caregiver Support Program. In Monmouth County, we celebrated Caregivers in November by hosting our first annual "Caregiver Retreat". This event was held at the Sheraton Hotel in Eatontown. Caregivers were pampered and given information on how to care for themselves and how to access resources in the community that would be helpful to them.

The National Family Caregiver Support Program (NFCSP) was cre-

ated in November 2000 by an amendment to the Older Americans Act. Administered by the U.S. Administration on Aging, the NFCSP provides grants to States and Tribal Organizations to implement programs offering a range of direct services and supports to caregivers of chronically ill, frail, or elderly relatives, or relatives with developmental disabilities. The program also extends services to grandparents caring for their grandchildren at home.

While there are emotional and social benefits to looking after frail and disabled persons within the home, research shows that care giving can place emotional, physical, and financial strain on caregivers and their families. To help alleviate this strain, the NFCSP helps provide:

- information and referral to programs and services for caregivers;
- eligibility screening;

- individual counseling;
- support groups; and
- respite care for people who need a short break from the strain of care giving.

The aforementioned services are provided through the Monmouth County Office on Aging. Caregivers should contact Colleen Smith, Caregiver Specialist at **732-308-3770 x8780**. She can advise you about what services may be available to you and how to access them.



Caregivers getting a massage during the Caregiver Retreat on November 6th

ALERTS!

It's important to get a flu shot this season! Visit the Health Department on the Monmouth County website to find where to get a flu shot near you.

Don't forget that the Open Enrollment period for Medicare Part D is from November 15th through December 31st 2010. If you wish to change your insurance policy or carrier you must do so during the open enrollment time. If you wish to change and need assistance, call the Office on Aging at 732-431-7450.

Monmouth County Wellness Discount Program cards are still available. You can receive discounts on eyeglasses, hearing aids and other medical items as well as prescriptions. Call the Office on Aging and we will send you a brochure and card.

November is National Alzheimer's Disease Awareness month. Learn about Alzheimer's Disease through the publications of the Alzheimer's Association and articles in the newspapers and online at www.alz.org.