

NEWSLINES



Michael T. Ruane
Executive Director
Tel. 877.222.3737
732.431.7450

OF THE DIVISION ON AGING, DISABILITIES AND VETERAN SERVICES

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www.visitmonmouth.com/aging

A New Executive Director



Michael T. Ruane is the new Executive Director of the Division on Aging, Disabilities and Veterans Services. Prior to being appointed to this position on January 26, 2012, he was the co-founder of The James Thomas Group (TJTG), a Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Business, which did emergency management and force protection consulting. He has had over 30 years of intensive experience – both with TJTG and Fort Monmouth – in the counter-terrorism, emergency management, and Weapons of Mass Destruction arena. He has written emergency operations, contingency, and continuity of

operations plans and conducted numerous mass casualty, hostage, terrorism and other exercises for Federal and local Government agencies.

A graduate of Seton Hall University, Michael Ruane's civilian career has spanned the fields of human resources, resource management, and plans and operations. He has over 10 years experience as an employee relations and benefits manager at both Chase Manhattan Bank and Fort Monmouth where he was involved in many programs for veterans and the physically and mentally challenged. He is the recipient of numerous awards and commendations from both the public and private sector, to include the Chase Manhattan Bank Outstanding Citizen Award and the Army's Superior Service and Commander's Awards and the Achievement Medal for Civilian Services. Ruane served 30 years in the U.S. Army, Army

National Guard, and Army Reserve and retired in 1993 as a Colonel. He had over 13 years of command time at the company, battalion and brigade level including two Infantry companies in Viet Nam. Among his over 20 awards and decorations are the Legion of Merit, Bronze Star, Purple Heart, and Combat Infantryman's Badge.

Ruane is also the Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Information Age -- Info Age—Science and History Learning Center, a National Historic Site, and New Jersey's WWII Living Memorial in the former U.S. Army Evans Area in Wall Township.

InfoAge is dedicated to the preservation and education of information age technologies as it honors the pioneers of communications, and through interactive hands-on displays and presentations, it inspires people – especially children – to learn about

and appreciate information technology to improve their lives.

Ruane has seven children and 10 grandchildren. He lives in West Long Branch with his wife, Barbara, the President of TJTG and a West Long Branch Councilwoman.

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CAREGIVER CORNER

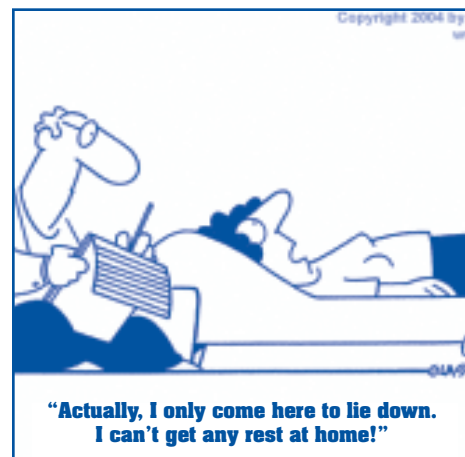
Laughter is the Best Medicine

Caregiving can be a serious and stressful business as any of you who are caregivers already know. The work is rewarding but can also be hazardous to your health. Ironic, isn't it? As you are providing care to someone else - in the form of running errands, cooking meals, or providing personal care - to help them maintain their health and/or independence, you can end up damaging your own health by virtue of self neglect. One of the many ways to make sure that you take care of yourself is by laughing ... as much as possible.

Laughing doesn't cost anything, you don't even have to leave the house to do it, and it has proven benefits. Medical researchers have found that laughter shifts our internal chemistry significantly. It reduces the level of cortisol (stress hormones) and increases the number of white blood cells available to fight disease. It also triggers the release of endorphins which are the hormones that make us feel good! Some people run or exercise vigorously to trigger the release of endorphins. You can do

that too but laughing doesn't take nearly as much effort. Here are some ways to consider introducing more laughter into your life:

- Do you have a funny friend; someone who you know makes you laugh? Call them, often;
- Browse the humor section in the library and check out some funny books; you may also want to read Norman Cousins' book Anatomy of an Illness in which he recounts his routine use of Marx Brothers movies to provide pain relief while battling a serious, life threatening illness;
- Surf the web and find websites that are dedicated to humor. Or video clips of your favorite comedian on youtube.com;
- Read the comics in the newspaper.
- Watch cartoons. Television stations like Boomerang air old cartoons such as Looney Tunes and the Flintstones, and others which you might enjoy. Don't feel embarrassed watching cartoons at your age. Take your medicine!



- There are situation comedies of all sorts on television and reruns of old ones like Seinfeld. Make it your business to make time for at least one (or two) of these a day.

You deserve to laugh – make it a gift to yourself – many times - every day!

New Medicare Screening Benefits

The Affordable Care Act makes many improvements to Medicare. If you have Original Medicare, you will now be able to get a yearly "wellness" visit and many preventive services

for free. Now is the time to get the most out of your Medicare. The best way to stay healthy is to live a healthy lifestyle including exercising, eating well, maintaining a healthy weight,

and not smoking. Medicare can help. Medicare now pays for many preventive services to keep you healthy by finding health problems early, when treatment works best, and to

keep you from getting certain diseases. Preventive services include exams, shots, lab tests and screenings. They also include programs for health monitoring, and counseling and education to help you take care of your own health. Visit www.mymedicare.gov to get

direct access to your preventive health information—24 hours a day, every day. You can track your preventive services, get a two-year calendar of the Medicare tests and screenings you are eligible for and print a personalized report to take to your next doctor's appointment.

These services are available to those with Original Medicare Part B. If you get your health coverage through a Medicare Advantage Plan (like an HMO or PPO) call your plan for more information.

ALERTS!

The Gold Star Program

The Monmouth County Division on Aging, Disabilities and Veterans Services has launched, in partnership with the Monmouth County Sheriff's Office, a program called "Gold Star Senior Travel". The program is easy and effective. If you want to join simply place the gold circle sticker in your rear driver's side window and fill out a card with your emergency information and place the card in your glove compartment. If you are in an accident or become unable to operate your vehicle, law enforcement and emergency response personnel will know by the Gold Star that there is emergency contact information in your glove compartment. The information includes your name, address, phone number (s) and the name, address and phone number (s) of the person you want contacted, as well as the medications you currently take, any allergies you may have, and the name and phone number of your physician. Remember to update your Gold Star information card if your information changes. It's that simple. For a Gold Star kit call the Monmouth County Office on Aging at **732-431-7450** or the Sheriff's Office at **732-577-5743**.

ALERTS!

2012 Monmouth County Senior Art Show

Mark your calendars! The Monmouth County Office on Aging will again be sponsoring the Senior Art Show during the Month of July at the Monmouth County Library Headquarters on Symmes Drive in Manalapan. Anyone who has seen this show knows how much talent resides in our County. And if you are not already on our Senior Art Show mailing list and would like to enter, please contact the art show coordinator, Joni Baron, at Joanne.Baron@co.monmouth.nj.us or (732) 308-3770 ext. 8919. Joni will put your name on our application packet mailing list.

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WELLNESS

Healthy Lifestyle Habits Prevent Sudden Death

No one plans to die suddenly from a heart problem, but unfortunately about 300,000 Americans do every year. A sudden fatal heart problem often strikes without any warning signs or symptoms. However, a recent Harvard University study suggests that most cardiac deaths can be prevented. Primary prevention is one strategy to lessen the risk of sudden cardiac deaths. The study estimates that 81% of all cases of sudden death are potentially preventable by making positive lifestyle changes.

The Harvard study included 18,722 women. Their lifestyles were assessed every 2 to 4 years over a period of 26 years. Researchers found four lifestyle practices strongly and independently linked to a decreased risk of sudden death:

- Not smoking
- Exercising regularly, 30-plus minutes daily
- Maintaining weight in a healthy range (BMI less than 25)

- Eating a healthy diet (high adherence to the Mediterranean diet).

In addition, researchers compared the risk of sudden death with persons who had none of these healthy lifestyle factors and found that:

- Having even one healthy lifestyle factor decreased the risk of sudden death by nearly half (48%)
- Having two healthy lifestyle factors cut the risk by 59%
- Three healthy lifestyle factors cut the risk of sudden death by 67%
- Four healthy lifestyle factors cut the risk of sudden death by an astounding 92%
- Even among nonsmokers, following the other three healthy lifestyles would still prevent 78% of all sudden deaths.

The message is clear. If you want to keep your heart beating and enjoy life for years to come, exercise regularly, maintain a healthy weight, eat a healthy diet, and don't smoke. www.wellsources.com.

Monmouth County Division on Aging, Disabilities and Veteran Services

P.O. Box 1255
21 Main and Court Center
Freehold, New Jersey 07728

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