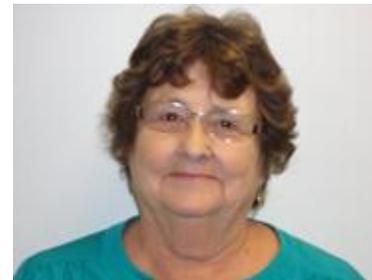




Volunteer of the Month: Nancy Hodson



The Volunteer Ombudsman Program is pleased to announce a new feature - Volunteer of the Month. This month we are proud to feature **Nancy Hodson**. Nancy was a part of the very first class of VOP trainees and began serving at Donnellson Health Center (Lee County, southeast Iowa) in October 2013. Prior to transitioning to the VOP, Nancy served in the Resident Advocate Committee program with our office for about 10 years.

Nancy lives near Farmington with her husband Bob. They have been married for 58 years. They have three children, six grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

Nancy is originally from the California Bay Area. Shortly after Nancy and Bob married and had their first child, the couple decided to move back to Bob's home state of Iowa. At 22 years old, Nancy felt like moving to small-town Iowa from California was like moving to a foreign country, but she grew to love her new home.

Nancy took a job as a licensed practical nurse at the Mount Pleasant Mental Health Institute. She then received a scholarship so that she could work toward becoming a registered nurse. She started working in a nursing home, but did not find it to be a good fit at the time and decided to pursue obstetrics instead. Eventually she landed at Southeastern Community College in Keokuk as an instructor and program coordinator.

Nancy initially stalled her college education in order to move to Iowa, but years later she picked up where she left off and, at 51 years old, earned a bachelor's degree from Western Illinois.

She retired about 13 years ago, but quickly became bored. She taught as an adjunct instructor for a while, but eventually left that role and began to volunteer for the Resident Advocate Committee and Senior Medicare Patrol. She was motivated to volunteer because she needed something new to do, saw there was a need and wanted to give back.

It took her some time to feel comfortable being around older people. She identified with them and felt sad after visiting.

"I encourage them to find their voice and speak up," Nancy said. "I really feel like I am an advocate."

Nancy notes that she gets just as much or more out of serving as a Volunteer Ombudsman as the residents.

"You feel you have a purpose and it empowers you," Nancy said. "I feel like I'm needed. I have something to offer."

The VOP is proud to have Nancy as one of its longest-serving volunteers. Thank you for all your service!



New Volunteers

- Connie McCain – Bethany Lutheran (Council Bluffs)



Monthly Reports Due

This is a friendly reminder that monthly reports for April should be submitted if you have not already done so. Online reports must be completed by May 5. Contact your VOP Coordinator for technical assistance.



In the News...

Older Americans Act reauthorization signed

President Barack Obama signed the Older Americans Act Reauthorization Act of 2016 on April 19, ensuring that older Americans will receive key benefits, care and social services through 2019.

Some of the new legislation includes upgrades to areas such as nutrition, elder abuse and support for caregivers. New legislation was also added to ensure states will receive guidance in respect to caring for Holocaust survivors.

The Older Americans Act was originally enacted by Congress in 1965 to promote the well-being of older Americans and assist them in maintaining their independence through various home and community based services.

[Older Americans Act Reauthorization Act](#)

Whitehouse.gov

Marion nursing home prepares for new kind of therapy: backyard chickens



Volunteer Anniversaries

The following volunteers have served with us for two years or more:

- Kay Cota - Embassy

Crestview Acres in Marion went before city council last March and requested that a 2014 ordinance allowing single-family homes to raise urban chickens be amended to also include nursing homes.

The requests were granted and Crestview Acres received its chicks on April 13. The staff intends to use the chickens for therapeutic exercises.

[The Cedar Rapids Gazette](#)

[KCRG](#)



Continuing Education Opportunities & Events

Statewide VOP Conference Call

The next Statewide Conference call will be at 2 p.m. on May 18. Join VOP Volunteer Coordinator Sarah Hinzman and Central-Iowa Local Long-Term Care Ombudsman Tonya Amos as they discuss self-care tips for advocates.

Call: (877) 273-4202 (toll-free)

Conference Room #: 877-693-990

Older Americans Month

May is Older Americans Month and the six Area Agencies on Aging will be hosting walks to "Blaze a Trail for Active Aging" on May 26 in cities throughout the state. Contact your local AAA for more information on when and where the one-mile walks will take place.

This year's theme for Older Americans Month is "Blaze a Trail" and the Administration for Community Living encourages communities to continue to raise awareness about issues facing older adults. Click the links below for more information on Older Americans Month or to share what makes you a trail blazer for older Americans!

[Older Americans Month](#)

[NEI3A](#)

[Elderbridge](#)

[Share Your Story](#)

Using Improv to Improve Life with Alzheimer's

While caring for her mother with Alzheimer's, Karen Staube and her husband Mondy Carter realized there was a connection between improv and effectively communicating with Karen's mother.

Rehab and Care Center (Sergeant Bluff)

- Paul Venner - Regency Park Nursing and Rehab (Carroll)
- Dixie Johnson - Eventide Lutheran and Denison Care Center (Denison)
- Maxine Stiemsma - Whispering Heights at Hegg Memorial (Rock Valley)
- Karen Dokken - Hawkeye Care Center (Spirit Lake)
- Mary Heikens - Hawkeye Care Center (Milford)
- Roger Leff - Westwood Nursing & Rehab (Sioux City)



Trivia!

Are you a trivia buff? Answer our monthly trivia question for a chance to win some great prizes!

Volunteers can submit answers to volunteerVOP@iowa.gov or call the VOP coordinator; one submission per volunteer. Only volunteers who submit correct answers will be entered into the prize drawing. The correct answer and name of the winner will be featured in the following month's newsletter. All trivia responses are due by May 18.

The prize for this month's

The couple recently gave a TED MED Talk on techniques for communication with Alzheimer's patients.

TED MED Talk

Brain Wellness Conference

Join the Alzheimer's Association - Greater Des Moines Chapter at 6:45 p.m. on May 16 for an opportunity to learn about healthy aging. The event will be held in the Past Time Room at the Lodge of Ashworth (909 Ashworth Road, West Des Moines).

RSVP to Mary Hall at mhall@hci-vns.org

Protecting Yourself and Your Family from Identity Theft

Clarke County State Bank Vice President/Director of Business Development Diane Ogbourne will give a presentation on identity theft prevention from noon to 1 p.m. on May 24 at Homestead Assisted Living and Memory Care (334 NW View Drive, Osceola).

RSVP: (641) 342-2888

trivia winner is either one free hour of continuing education OR a VOP swag bag.

This month's trivia question...

What year was Older Americans Month established?

- A) 1975
- B) 1982
- C) 1963
- D) 1955

Last month's trivia question...

Which of the following foods are good for the brain as you age?

- A) Whole grains
- B) Dairy
- C) Fruits
- D) All of the above**

Congratulations to Judy Avritt (Union Park Health Services, Des Moines) for answering the trivia question correctly!