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AMES, IOWA

- Aging -

INVENTORY
~~OF~~
SELECTED
COMMUNITY PROGRAMS AND SERVICES
FOR
OLDER RESIDENTS
AND
OTHERS

CONTENTS

LETTER OF PRESENTATION

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The Honorable Stuart Smith
Mayor of Ames
Ames, Iowa 50010

Dear Mayor Smith:

We are pleased to submit this inventory of aging programs and services to you and other community leaders.

We do not pretend that it is an exhaustive, in-depth study. We do feel, however, that it is fairly definitive of the present status of these programs and services in Ames and that it can be useful in helping point the way to needed additions or improvements.

The State of Iowa, Commission on the Aging, made possible the printing of this report. We express our gratitude to them.

Yours truly,

Elizabeth L. Coulter, President

Elaine M. McCrory, Vice-President

B R I E F S U M M A R Y

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Following is a listing of basic aging programs and services which the inventory showed to be available or not available in Ames.

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Available in Ames

Adult Day Care Service	Community organization to help
Ambulance service	with housing for elderly
Large print books	Legal help for those who can't pay
Social and recreational center	Group meals
Courses of learning in subjects	Delivery of meals to homebound
of special interest to the	Pre-retirement training
elderly	Visiting nurse service
Employment program for elderly	Telephone reassurance
Foster care for older people	Transportation service
Handyman service	Visiting programs
Homemaker service	Volunteer service opportunities,
Health Aide service	including "Volunteerism" at ISU

Not Available in Ames

Elimination and prevention of architectural barriers
Delivery of books, tapes, and records to shut-ins
Multi-purpose center
Information and referral service
Special restaurant service

I N V E N T O R Y O F S E L E C T E D P R O G R A M S A N D
S E R V I C E S ... with comments from professionals and people
of varying ages throughout the community.

Community Programs and Services
for Elderly Residents and Others

Available in Ames

Ambulance service

Yes

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Comments

"The Story County Board of Supervisors has allocated \$50,000
in ambulance service funds for Ames, Nevada and Story City
hospitals. The money will be provided from a portion of
the recent revenue sharing fund the county has received."

Elimination and prevention of
architectural barriers to the
elderly and handicapped in
getting around the community

No

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Comments

"Work is being done on a proposed ordinance to come up early
in 1973 pertaining to such architectural barriers. This
will be similar to the present Cedar Rapids ordinance."

Large print books, recorded
books, Braille books, records,
tapes

Yes-large
print books

Delivery of books, tapes, and
records to shut-ins

No

.....

Comments

"While the library has no special program for the aged, aids
are available for readers with visual difficulties: large
type books, Ednalite - a lighted magnifier which magnifies
a whole paragraph at a time."

Comments (continued)

"A suggestion was made about the delivery of books, tapes, and records to shut-ins: Establish a multi-purpose center which works with the Iowa Commission for the Blind to make materials available to those who need them."

Age 80 - "(Need) papers, magazines and books for shut-ins."

Multi-purpose center, including such services as information and referral, telephone reassurance, counseling, recreation, and meals

No

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Comments

"At present churches and the hospital help with some of these services. Maybe more volunteers would be helpful."

"Ask for a city wide multi-purpose center for the elderly staffed by a full time director or administrator and available volunteers."

"Full time coordinator (is) needed for services available."

Age 65 - "I think it would be a nice program for the retired folks if it could be possible to have a building some place in Ames, where clothing, furniture and most anything needed to maintain a home and family, if needed repair it could be repaired by some of our retired folks who have time on their hands. I visited some years ago The Helping Hand group ar Cambridge, Iowa. I visited the building and saw what a wonderful job they had been doing. Have also visited with folks that helped with the program, they found it to be a great blessing to them and to the people they had been able to help."

Social and recreational center for or including older people

Yes

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Comments

"At present the Open Door center is open Tuesday from 1 to 4 p.m. for crafts and during the same hours on Wednesday for socializing."

"If there were a paid person at Open Door to organize activities and locate isolated senior citizens, more people could be helped by the program already in operation."

Comments (continued)

"More volunteers, group leaders and transportation are needed."

"People from the community could volunteer their time and their talents at Open Door to help organize activities on other days than the existing activities."

Age 76 - "One more thing - we want something to do. We would much prefer to 'wear out' not 'rust out'. We also would like to have 'get togethers' occasionally. A place where we could gather and have fun, or at least have someone our own age to talk to. Not everyone, of course, is trying to live on social security."

Age 42 - "I agree with you that the problem of how the aged live comfortably in a community is not peculiarly their problem, but one for which all of us share responsibility. Ames has a vast reservoir of activities - lectures, concerts, etc. - which many older people enjoy, and in which they can participate. Sometimes I wonder, though, about those people who do not care for these things, but would rather gather to talk, drink coffee, take part in crafts activities. There is no center that I know of for them. About the only such activity available is the luncheons at one of the churches here, and the attendance at those, which has caused the sessions to increase in number, indicates this is fulfilling a very real need."

"Autumn Leaf, a publication of the Golden Age Cooperative Board, periodically lists social and recreational activities for seniors."

Age 66 - "My church has a program for the 50+. The Friday meetings at the Congregational Church for the many people that don't attend I don't know how they promote the program."

Age 67 - "You cannot push a person into outside - out of the home rather - activities, be it church, recreation or whatever."

Courses of education or training
in subjects of special interest
to older people

Yes

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Comments

"Crafts at Octagon and Adult Education at the Community College."

Age 62 - "Tuition waived at all public schools and colleges."

Comments (continued)

Age 80 - "Contact and participation in activities of interest to the individual."

Age 81 - "People are most happy when doing something creative - art, writing, cabinet making, - or whatever. Adult education in Ames is a great help to those who are able to attend classes. Just consuming what may be offered, just to pass the time, is not the answer. We must become involved. We can only get as much from any activity as we ourselves are willing or able to contribute."

Employment program for older people

Yes

Comments

"The Iowa State Employment Service tries to find employment for every elderly citizen who applies."

"Mid-Iowa Community Action, Inc. is investigating the possibilities of a program that would allow a limited number of senior citizens to work 20 hours a week at \$1.60 per hour in non-profit organization."

Age 37 - "A major need is making the aged feel a continuing sense of usefulness. City revenue sharing funds should be used to provide the aged employment in such things as: (1) social service roles, (2) beautifying city parks and boulevards, and (3) repair and carpentry activities."

Age 62 - "Should you be able to continue to work some and earn an income, it should be exempt from the income tax the same way investment income is exempt."

Foster care for older people

No

Handyman service

Yes

Comments

"Call lumberyard or see special newspaper ads (for handyman service). Coordinator needed for this service."

"Sometimes YMCA students or ISU volunteers will come on call."

"A program offering free or reduced yard work snow removal, installation of storms and screens, etc."

Comments (continued)

Age 58 - "Need a list of handymen for home service."

Age 70 - "There are times of the year when it would be nice to have someone ask if help couldn't be used like - mowing lawn, especially in the hot summer, scooping walks in the winter, helping put on storm windows, etc. These jobs are too strenuous for elderly people."

Homemaker-Health Aide service

Yes

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Comments

"Find more people willing to do this type of work."

"(Need) groups willing to help with financial support so service can continue to be given on a sliding scale fee and all may receive help at a cost they can afford."

"The people of the community should be aware of the service provided and how to obtain it, make referrals of those in need so they may have help, and help with recruitment of people willing to work a few hours a day."

Age 69 - "Homemaker Aid is good - based on ability to pay for it. I'd like to see an extension of homemaker service program to further enable elderly people to have help in their homes, hence be able to live-out (in their own homes) regardless of their financial status for a longer time - usually as long as two people are together with some efficiency on the part of one or the other. (Institutional living arrangements are wonderful for those completely unable to operate on their power even with assistance!! There comes a time for many when institutional public care is a blessing. So let's have some group homes - for board and room and supervision - for the time between your own home and a nursing home."

Community organization which helps with suitable housing for older people

Yes

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Comments

"The Fair Housing Commission seeks to prevent discrimination in the selling, buying, and renting of houses."

Comments (continued)

"A custodial home or a home where board and room are available (is needed) for those who do not need nursing care, at a cost people can afford. Many just need a place where someone cooks the meals and does the washing and heavy cleaning. It does not need to be fancy, but could be a dormitory type of home."

"Through the Story County Houseing Authority low income families and also the elderly are aided in getting housing."

One respondent said, "Lots more thought needs to be given to the problem of housing and housing repair for older people. There's greater need than can be handled now."

Age 42 - "In my opinion, the biggest single problem for people living in Ames is the cost of housing. It's too bad that some people who live here can't afford to live here. Some efforts are being made to correct the problem, but a good many persons who are in a position to push the matter - namely much of the membership of the city council - cannot see the need, and are not very active. I believe a federally taxed subsidized program may be the only solution, although annexation may help some by reducing land prices."

Age 67 - "This is a good time to be growing older. Much interest is being shown in all of the above areas. I think the most important is low income decent housing."

"The Committee on the Aging of Bethesda Lutheran Church is working toward developing and operating a housing project for the well elderly."

Age 69 - "To me the greatest need is for good housing for low income people. Not elegant, but the necessary things and not too small."

Age 69 - "I am convinced that Ames does not need tighter rules, more costly homes, hence forbidding too many in need, control by our state for housing elderly. Often the person with moderate means, has human needs, greater than the poor, because of less provision made for them. Money can't be eaten or produce extra hands to steady the frail."

Age 69 - "Please tell me why Ames cannot have a low-income housing unit. There are many widows and single men who have difficulty in finding proper living facilities at a price they can afford. The town should be able to petition government for such a building. Ottumwa has three lovely ones. It has comparable taxes, I believe."

Age 71 - "More low cost housing - Nebraska does a good job with this and federal aid."

Comments (continued)

Age 72 - "I would like to see more low income housing. Modest units - small and efficient, but not on a grand scale. I would like for these units to be available to anyone - not only for very-low-income people, but for those of moderate income as well."

Age 73 - "Would like decent housing I can afford. In my case, lower utilities cost. Almost half of my income goes for rent."

Age 76 - "Housing for the elderly that would be a convenience to the grocery store and transportation is needed. Rents here are very high and small one bedroom apartments are at a premium. So many other places, even smaller than Ames, have nice federal housing apartments with reasonable rents."

Age 78 - "My suggestion is to relieve the taxes for elderly living in their own home. Not the well-to-do elderly, but the ones on the so-called "poverty level" with very limited income. I keep two students with cooking privileges in my basement which helps pay for utilities. It increases utilities also, but it is good to have someone in the house with me."

Information and referral service,
including service to older people

No

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Comments

"A local coordinating council (or director) could give information and referral service on call."

"Provide an office and a director or coordinator to assist in the planning and development of needed services for the elderly."

Legal help for those who cannot
afford to pay

Yes

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Comments

"Lawyers presently serve on a shifting basis - month at a time - aid based on need."

"A coordinating council would be helpful in referrals and use of available facilities."

Group meals service

Yes

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Comments

"Group meals are available Tuesday at St. Andrews Lutheran Church and Wednesday at Bethesda Lutheran Church."

"The program could serve more effectively with a regular center where group meals (would be) available every day, probably at reduced rates or in connection with a school lunch program possibly served after the children have eaten."

Age 70 - "Have some committee call the aged for the Bethesda dinners. They forget, even to call in cancellations, and some of us forget to contact them."

Delivery of meals to the
homebound

Yes

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Comments

"The program should be better publicized so more people would be aware of it. Some funds are available so people who cannot afford meals are not denied."

"Many people of the community are helping in delivering the meals. Recently a third team was started in order to get the meals delivered more quickly. More people are needed at this time for this service, and these people could volunteer through FISH."

Age 88 - "Meals-on-Wheels are a boon for older individuals who live alone and are unable to prepare nutritious meals."

Special restaurant meals service
for older people.

No

Pre-retirement training

Yes

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Comments

"Some pre-retirement training is available now. This is expected to increase through the county extension office."

Age 73 - "We prepare in our education to make a living. We should also prepare for our retirement."

Visiting nurse service

Yes

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Comments

"Up to this time, the Visiting Nurse Agency has not had any problem obtaining enough registered nurses on an hourly basis. Consequently, this agency has not had to deny requests for service. Due to United Way funds, it has been possible to give services to anyone in need, charging on a sliding scale."

"The major problem is that people in the community are not aware of the service or how it can be helpful. Visiting nurses have felt their services have been much more effective when they had opportunity to work with terminal patients before they become critically ill. These patients have expressed gratitude for supportive care, medicine, diet, and bowel management. Many lay people experience difficulty in taking medicine that their physicians order on an "as necessary" basis. The agency would also like to be helpful to mothers with new babies and anyone that needs any assistance during an acute or chronic illness."

"The effectiveness of the program would be increased if people who know of the services could inform others and above all support the United Way of Ames."

Reassurance by regularly scheduled
telephone calls

Yes

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Comments

"The Golden Age Club provides this among their members."

"Probably some churches could help with this through volunteers or senior age groups."

"Fish-Line offers this service -- 232-3934."

Transportation service to the
elderly

Yes

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Comments

"Through FISH of Ames, Inc. - 24 hours a day seven days a week."

Comments (continued)

- "Better and more adequate means of transportation is needed for senior citizens."
- Age 58 - "Small type compact station wagon bus for door to door transportation available upon request. (Need) grocery delivery system."
- Age 62 - "Travel fare should be reduced to half on all public carriers."
- Age 65 - "There are many older folks that have no car and maybe no family in town. It would be nice if some kind of bus transportation or car could come to their home, to go grocery shopping, etc., with folks that could help them. Many cannot walk or wait for buses and cab fare can be expensive for many. I am very disappointed in the service our city cab company gives. They very seldom get out of their cabs to help assist anyone, or help an older person in or out of cab. Perhaps a shuttle bus service of some kind could be provided. I know of a man of retirement age that did this in California. He took folks from retirement homes, etc., to shopping centers and he felt needed and provided a helpful service."
- Age 69 - "More and more senior citizens are having to give up their cars and need public transportation. The taxi is too expensive for many of them."
- Age 69 - "Bus service is growing worse rather than improving. Many older people drive because there is no adequate service. Taxis are very expensive for those of us who live on a moderate income. There are many driving who should not."
- Age 69 - "Transportation could be a problem, but buses during the week and good friends with a car take care of me."
- Age 69 - "Every city should provide bus transportation or some other at a reduced rate for all those over 65 years or retirement age status, as well as physically handicapped. Without public facilities, handicapped and elderly drive at times, in places, and under weather conditions which create increased risks to all ages in the transportation stream. In Ames this is a real problem - since 'east portion' of Ames, 'some south of Lincoln Way' areas have really never had facilities."
- Age 71 - "Transportation - daytime and evening needed."
- Age 72 - "I feel that public transportation is a must for older people. Many do not have cars and cannot afford cab fare."
- Age 73 - "Please keep transportation going."

Comments (continued)

Age 73 - "I'm outside of the city so transportation is sort of a problem, although I still drive."

Age 76 - "Many of the elderly no longer drive - bus service is not the answer in every case - buses do not go past the home of every older person."

Age 76 - "We need the buses to run on the half hour schedule instead of running only every hour."

Age 78 - "Bus planning is important. In my own case, I drive my car, live in my own little home, do volunteer work at the hospital and church. I am living on my Social Security check, which isn't too much - \$129 now. I could get along nicely if I didn't have to pay \$500.00 for taxes. Of course, I can't do it out of my income, so have to take it out of my savings every year."

Age 80 - "Transportation made available for public affairs, church, theatre, etc."

Age 88 - "The community should provide better transportation facilities for older persons."

Visiting of older people in their
homes, hospital, nursing, adult
foster, boarding, custodial and
retirement homes, and other places

Yes

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Comments

"Through FISH of Ames, Inc. Services include emergency help for housework, meals or transportation, help and companionship for the elderly and shut-ins. Help is given in locating needed articles and services."

Age 66 - "Right now I have no complaints. It is wonderful of you and your committee for taking this inventory and I hope people will give you a list of their needs so you'll have something to work on. I do enough calling-on-people to know there are people that need outside contact. Calling on the elderly and shut-ins has been a part of my life. They give me a lift."

Age 81 - "For me, loneliness is the biggest cross I have to bear. The visiting minister project of the Collegiate Presbyterian Church is a great help to the older people in this community. I've often thought a husband-wife team could be the best means of keeping in contact. It is downright shame to prolong life and not make it possible for older people to be useful, which in turn makes for happiness."

Public agency or private organization
or association offering volunteer
service opportunities to older people
who are looking for useful ways to
occupy their time

Yes

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Comments

Age 62 - "In Iowa there is a chairman of volunteer services under the Social Services Department at a modest salary. I feel he is doing a good job in this area, coordinating such programs as FISH and a volunteer chairman for each county, who then gets volunteer chairman for each community. This provides needed help for the elderly at a local level using volunteers from teen-agers to 90 years.

I can't see the need for a man in Washington, D.C. to get over \$30,000 a year to head the so called volunteer services. It has been my observation that most of the federal budgets to help people go to 'overhead' - the hiring of experts at generous salaries. Very little money 'trickles' down to the people who need help. There are many elderly people who need help, but paying an expert will be of no use, if there is no way he can reach out to the elderly."

Age 68 - "I feel that too many of the old age programs are simply to entertain. An older person needs to be needed. I have taken up Braille, the transcription of literature into Braille for the Iowa Comm. for the Blind, and it really fills this need. If only more programs such as this could be offered to older people, they would feel more like their lives were of value to the work. The Braille program is volunteer and is done in the home. That is what most older people want, to be of service to someone in their own homes."

"Our older volunteers perform a vital service here at Mary Greeley Hospital for the patients and the families of patients. Our Hospitality Shop utilizes many older volunteers who help to serve patients and patients' families, run the cash register, if they are less able to be on their feet, and perform other necessary tasks in the shop.

We also have a Special Services committee. This committee works primarily in our cataracts unit, performing small tasks for the patients, such as letter writing and reading, running errands, and visiting with them to help pass the time. We have found that the older volunteer is a very valuable addition to this committee as many of our cataract patients are elderly, and the older volunteer relates much more closely to these patients.

Some of our more active elderly people work with our patient's admission committee where they perform a very valuable service escorting patients who have been admitted to the hospital to the laboratory and X-ray, and then escorting them to their rooms where they help

Comments (continued)

orient the newly admitted patient to this room. These people are most useful and need as these volunteers often have to stay over the dinner hour and our younger volunteers cannot be here at that time as they are needed at home with their families.

The program is always in need of additional volunteers and would appreciate any help the community could give in procuring these volunteers. Continued monetary and moral support by the community are also always needed."

Age 69 - "Provide - or offer - pay for services rendered by retired, instead of present trend 'Voluntary Service - Free!'. The retired, whose services are acceptable should go on such as 'every one should be worth his hire' ... which means pay for them the services rendered. The aged are seldom financially able to give their labor, time, transportation costs, additional clothing and personal upkeep costs and health risks. Hence many valuable judgements, experiential learnings, and wisdom is lost years before it is buried beneath their 6 ft. of real estate or let float away in senility. Man is the world's most valuable resource and education is the tool to unlock man's powers and let his influence be felt, to make the world a better place because of that person's having gone through it.

Willful waste creates a woeful world. Our aging have much to share, which is monetarily worth paying for. This idea of taking off of a person because the law retired him is not healthy for our society. It breeds many vices; contempt, bitterness, unwholesome attitudes, etc., too numerous to mention."

"Mid-Iowa Community Action Inc. is at the present time seeking funding for an R.S.V.P. program, which could enhance the lives of many."

Other programs, services, and
suggestions not listed above.

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Comments

"Most elderly people regret giving up their own homes. I would like to see some type of organization in obtaining companions or live-in housekeepers. We have services of Homemaker-Health Aide during the day, but from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 a.m. it is difficult finding help for these people."

Comments (continued)

"We do have two private licensed boarding homes in Ames for people who do not need nursing care but cannot or do not want to live alone. We do need more of these."

"I would like to see a public supported complex consisting of various forms of living for the elderly, such as apartments when they are able to be independent; boarding or custodial type home where they have meals, laundry, cleaning and supervisory care; and then a nursing home for those needing nursing care. These various forms are available on a private basis, but they are unavailable to many people simply because they cannot afford them. This is especially true of people on moderate income down to the poverty level. I feel that if we can have public and non-profit agencies to give nursing and aide care in the home on a sliding scale as people can afford, we should be able to provide this service in nursing and custodial homes."

"The only service that comes to my mind right now is perhaps a daily phone call to elderly people living alone who are not recipients of the 'Meals-on-Wheels.' This would ascertain each and every day if the person is o.k. and if help were needed, it could be arranged for at that time."

"So far I've been able to remain very independent and am so involved in things that I can't even take advantage of programs available for the senior citizens. I don't have a rent problem but I'm sure many people have."

"A guaranteed adequate income, that would allow them to pay their own way and retain their dignity."

"There needs to be more recreational facilities made available for use by senior citizens. Our parks are full of facilities aimed at youth, but very few that can be used and enjoyed by senior citizens."

Age 37 - "A most pressing need is to foster the development of active associations through which the aged can articulate and advance their own interests. I am thinking here of a special interest group through which persuasive activities can be initiated - e.g. bringing political pressure to secure favorable legislation, etc. It is only as the aged become mobilized into an effective economy and political force will their rights be recognized and their needs be addressed. It is desirable to have advocates for the aged, but their interests are best advanced if they are a social force in society."

Comments (continued)

Age 37 - "Iowa State University should be encouraged through its research and extension functions to give more attention to the needs of Iowa's aged citizens.

"The Iowa Commission on the Aging needs to be revitalized and be more adequately funded by the legislature. Unfortunately, it's programs have too little visibility on the state.

"A major need is for persons who can work with local leadership in (1) defining local needs, (2) developing imaginative action programs and (3) facilitating community application for federal and state funds to help underwrite programs."

Age 42 - "I think Ames churches are, in many cases, sadly lacking in providing services to the members of their congregation, either young or old, and that the church attendance reflects this."

Age 58 - "Our basic problem - whether for the aged, the youth, the minority - is that we have dehumanized our way of life. Moreover, we tend to treat symptoms, not the real problem. Furthermore, we tend toward institutionalizing our system for dealing with problems.

"Probably basic to each of the items listed above is the fact that as individuals and as groups we have lost our sense of social responsibility. Unless we can recapture it, we really will be doing little more than applying an 'aspirin' treatment in our programming for the aged. Among other things this suggests that all elements who have a concern for the elderly should find ways of approaching the problems of the aging in a coordinated cooperating manner. Otherwise, we spin our wheels and at best are able to reach only the surface needs of the elderly - At worst, we may actually be working against their best interest through being more concerned with the welfare of the organization or agency than we are for meeting the real needs of the client.

"I suggest that one way to start is to bring all concerned groups and concerned leaders in each community together so that they can each learn what the others are doing and how organizations can find ways of supporting the efforts of each other."

Age 62 - "Property taxes should be reduced in proportion to ones reduced income."

Age 62 - "I believe the Outreach workers under the CAP programs have done a commendable job, but because they have been overloaded, have not been able to last long. The CAP's or MICA, in this area seem to be worrying that their federal funds will be cut. They also spend too much time on filling out forms and trying to 'fund' needed programs. There must be some way that local citizens can get needed help for their own elderly, without so much red-tape. Please check article in December McCalls under heading "Right Now."

Comments (continued)

- Age 65 - "Equalize property taxes in Ames as they have in Des Moines. I pay as much taxes on my property as some properties that sold for eight to ten thousand more than mine did."
- Age 67 - "Many of the above cannot be changed without the help of the individual."
- Age 67 - "Through Social Security, when a person reaches 65, his name could be returned to the city where he lives to be in an over 65 file. Each town would then know just how many they have and who."
- Age 68 - "It occurred to me that if older people could have an insurance that applied on a physical examination that more people would get one more often - at least once a year - and thus avoid many illnesses."
- Age 69 - "The senior citizens are being pretty well cared for by FISH - the dinners weekly at the Bethesda and St. Andrews Lutheran for good food and companionship - the public health nurse - housekeeping aids and Meals-on-Wheels - all help the elderly stay in their own homes."
- Age 69 - "Do away with retirement based solely on age attainment until 70 years. Offer retirement at early ages (protect employers in event of no mandatory retirement age before 70 by health and efficiency standards.) Stop deducting IPERS and FICA contributions from earnings by 'retired persons' who are earning within the guidelines of present \$1680 and \$1800 respectively (1973 amount will be \$2100) unless the deductions are credited toward increasing amount of monthly checks to earners."
- Age 70 - "Lower admissions to events are a big help and in many cases fill otherwise empty seats. Any 'Golden Age' budget helps such as this are frequently of benefit to both the businessman and the golden ager.

"Some help in coverage of nursing home charges most sorely needed - social security, medicare does not help to any extent at all."
- Age 72 - "I would hope that Medicare would pay more on drugs, and on physical examinations, etc."
- Age 72 - "I think that some of the projects in Ames are very worthwhile - Meals-on-Wheels, nursing service to homes, The Open Door, etc."
- Age 72 - "Those of us who were forced into retirement back 5 or 6 years ago have inadequate social security payments to meet the increased cost of living. Continue to pay full social security payments, regardless of how much a person makes, or stop deducting the tax payments and not giving credit for increased social security payments. Need for cheaper retirement homes. Realestate taxes should be reduced for persons over the age of 65, and credit given to renters, beyond 65 years. We should be exempt from income tax and IPERS

Comments (continued)

"completely. The retired should be given deductions (reduced rates) on transportation, entertainment, doctors, hospitals, etc."

Age 72 - "Everyone who works at all during their lifetime should be included in the social security system, with deductions comparable to their income. All wages under 20,000 should be included to help carry the minimum load for the ones on very low earnings. Social security payments should then begin at retirement age 65 for all concerned regardless of earnings, just like from an insurance retirement policy, instead of going through the 'gray' area from 65 to 72 often on greatly reduced earnings. Those who never do qualify under social security from their earnings should have deductions from their welfare payments and those should be adjusted upward to permit this. Taxpayers at large would then foot the deficit, but everyone would then be involved under social security at age 65."

Age 73 - "Be interested in a hobby, enjoy young people and keep busy by helping others. Housing, nutrition, spiritual well-being head the list for help to the aging. I read of new laws concerning nursing homes, but I have had no contact with them. The Golden Agers and churches provide many good activities."

Age 73 - "I am enjoying retirement and have encountered no special problems so far. I do, however, think that property taxes for retired persons whose major source of income is retirement pay and which is under \$10,000 should be reduced or at least frozen at current levels."

Age 75 - "I have no complaints."

Age 76 - "I feel that in order of importance money matters most. Any older person must eat, pay rent or taxes on living quarters, utilities, etc. Rising prices, fixed income are not at all reasonable to keep soul and body together.

"Homes for the elderly are usually not satisfying. Older persons some senile, others normal mentally, but not ambulatory. Now to those who still prefer living in their own homes and are still normally able to do so, like to travel, some like to go fishing in different states. This last is prohibitive because out of state fishing licenses range from nothing to \$15.00 for a week or maybe two weeks. I suggest a federal fishing license, to be at a reasonable fee (I suggest \$5.00) and to be sold by any state, good in any state, and each state retain that fee, minus a few cents for printing costs etc. I am contacting everybody I can right now to try to get them to write their Congressman to that effect. I find that Congressmen welcome our suggestions as one man wrote me "how do we know what you want if we are not told."

Comments (continued)

Age 79 - "When I grew up we were taught to save for your old age as we went along. We were taught not to spend unless we had the money to pay for it. In buying a house one has to borrow, but each month, like rent the amount was paid. I think Medicare and Medicaid has helped a great deal, but many people have it who do not really need it. I think younger people must be thoughtful in visiting lonely people. This does not take money I think younger people should take care of their own near relations and not look to the government for it. This, of course, is when they are able to do it. Young people should be urged to stay within their means. Do not try to keep up with the Joneses. There are too many attractive ads in newspapers, magazines, radio, and t.v. Everyone wants the latest. We should teach that there are more important values in life than money. Some people think if the federal government gives it to them, no one oays, but who is the federal government and where do they get their money? Each of us has his share to pay. In our community the "meals on wheels" is a great help to many older people. Helping young people to solve their problems is the most important work anyone can do. Not everyone can do this, but for those who can it gives a world of satisfaction in the retirement years."

Age 80 - "With Social security payments and the handout from IPERS, which has not been brought up to compensate for two years of elevation, the two of us can live in a modest way in an old house whose owner does not care for it's upkeep. Luxuries are out of the question. Little additional income is used for the upkeep of an old 1963 car. The talked about increase for IPERS with 10% across the board would mean almost \$8.00 for me, does not really take into consideration the really old people, who, as myself, had to retire after only 10 years of participation in IPERS. What I resent so much as the 'health' region, that I have to spend too much money for additional insurance on top of medicine and still have to pay for all prescriptions, medical checkups, always urged on ourselves."

"If you look to countries outside U.S.A., especially Europe, you will see that there is real concern and assistance for the old ones. discounts on rail, bus, airplace - fares etc. Here we are honored with lip service for senior citizens, golden agers, token concern by the Governors invitation for a group of poor ones to share a dinner in the mansion. Can dishonoring charity ever be replaced with real social justice, not always and still equating social principles with socialism and communism."

Age 81 - "Most old people need medical and legal assistance."

Comments (continued)

Age 82 - "My greatest complaint is the burden that taxes are much too heavy, particularly on us older citizens. I am 82 years old and my wife is in her 70's. We own and have lived in the same house 50 years. Back in the time my children were in school, my taxes were \$70.00 a year, now the same house, same utilities, taxes are \$476.00 a year. I have helped pay for 12 school buildings. I ask for tax reduction."

Age 84 - "We think the present program is quite satisfactory."

Age 85

THE ELDERLY IN GROUP HEALTH CARE FACILITIES

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Administrators, managers, nurses, and others in group health care or living facilities are especially aware of the needs of older people. These are some of the things they say -

It is felt that we can make our residents more happy by:

1. More volunteers to socialize and visit on an individual basis.
2. Volunteers to play games - other than bingo (which is well established here), rummy, cribbage, bridge, scrabble, or checkers. One patient would like to play chess.
3. Volunteers - to play the piano.
4. Volunteers - to help feed bed patients.
5. Volunteers - to read to small groups.
6. Even more children to adopt our elderly as grandparents.
7. In the summer, spring or fall - volunteers to walk outside with the ambulatory.

Also to provide an activity program; recreational activities - bingo, parties, singing, etc; religious services - prayer services weekly, Bible discussions occasionally; remotivation therapy - to stimulate thinking, create outside interest and provide group interaction; crafts.

In addition, a day care program where the individual continues to live in his own home while utilizing the services of the nursing home. It is set up:

1. To give older persons an opportunity to take part in a variety of activities during the day.
2. As part of a treatment plan to relieve tension in the family situations.
3. To provide semi-protective environment.
4. When appropriate, to delay or reduce the need for permanent placement in a nursing home.
5. To relieve isolation and loneliness, to furnish safety, security and protection.

AMES CHURCHES AND THE OLDER RESIDENTS

Working individually and together, the churches are uniquely suited to encourage, aid and conduct aging programs and services. Their efforts can be beneficial for both their own older members and other elderly in the community-at-large.

As part of the community inventory, church leaders were asked to answer some questions. Here is what leaders of 17 churches said.

ARE OLDER PEOPLE BEING GIVEN OPPORTUNITY TO SERVE THE CHURCH AS MUCH AS THEY MIGHT WISH?

Yes - 12; No - 3; No answer - 2

HOW ARE THEY SERVING?

"They serve in the regular functional departments, as Elders, Deacons and Deaconesses and members of the CWF, as well as in special areas, such as through Grandma's Attic, calling on shut-ins by telephone and personal visitation."

"Probably not really serving as much as they might wish. The opportunities are there - not always used perhaps - Alter Guild, Church School Teachers, FISH, many general committees within the church (traditional). Really great church school teachers."

"As ushers, in women's activities, bazaar, etc., on boards and committees, church school classes, officers in church school, women's society members, Sunday School Superintendents, reader, visitors, missionary, pianist, children's club work."

"I don't think that we've addressed ourselves to this yet. We have few old people, but I think we must have a fair number of people retired."

"Age does not prevent a person from serving in our congregation."

"We have a lay priesthood and all who are able, regardless of age, serve actively in the church in various capacities."

"Any work or opportunity that others may do is equally shared with the older members."

DOES THE CHURCH HAVE A STAFF MEMBER, LAYMAN, OR COMMITTEE WHO SEE THAT OLDER MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY ARE NOT CUT OFF FROM CHURCH?

Yes - 8; No - 6; Yes and No - 1; No answer - 2

"The Membership Department has accepted such responsibility and has previously sought to keep in touch with all the elderly. Right now there is not a really effective program going."

"We have many that attempt to make consistent calls - and two who regularly make rounds at rest homes - plus the clergy staff. Could do much more."

"Visitation pastor on the staff. Committee for the elderly."

"I am attempting to get our geographical zones (or subparishes) to become aware of who the elderly are in their neighborhood. This is without any concern for denomination."

"Not specifically. In a small membership we are all aware of each other. We do have a Courtesy Committee to visit those who do not come to church."

"Not necessary."

"We have a program where two brethren are assigned to visit every family at least once each month to look after the temporal and spiritual needs of the members."

"The premise of this question is wrong."

SOME PROJECTS SEEM "READY-MADE" FOR CHURCHES AND CHURCH GROUPS. DOES THE CHURCH HAVE ...

... a visitation program? Yes - 14; No - 3

... a transportation program that includes older people?
Yes - 9; No - 6; No answer - 2

"Only if they ask. Some get called, nothing arranged."

"Through FISH and Open Door."

"Only on an individual basis "

"Voluntary car pool."

... occasional day of celebration for elderly members who have give so much to the church?
Yes - 2; No - 13; No answer - 2

"Only a memorial service annually for those who have died."

"Only outside the church - private parties, etc. For example, a 'card' party for a member in a nursing home recently."

... a medium of communication to keep elderly informed of church activities and alert to community agencies and services that minister to their welfare?
Yes - 11; No - 6

ARE THE CHURCH AND COMMUNITY AGENCIES AND SERVICES WHICH OFFER HELP TO THE AGING WORKING TOGETHER?

Yes - 7; No - 5; Yes and No - 1; No answer - 4

"There is a working together in the Golden Age Cooperative Board, Meals-on-Wheels, FISH, Story County Social Services Council, and the Health Services Advisory Committee."

"No really much more could be done."

"Communications can always be improved."

"To a certain extent the pastor is a member of an Iowa State University committee on the problems of the aging."

"I don't feel that we are working together very well."

IS THE CHURCH OFFERING ENLIGHTENMENT TO STATE AND NATIONAL LEGISLATORS WHO SHOULD BE SENSITIVE TO THE BASIC PROBLEMS OF THE ELDERLY: ADEQUATE INCOME, ADEQUATE HOUSING, FAIR SYSTEMS OF TAXATION, FREEDOM FROM DISCRIMINATION IN EMPLOYMENT, AND ACCESS TO MEDICAL AND HEALTH CARE?

Yes - 6; No - 10; No answer - 1

"There is a social concerns movement in the Diocese that is working on this. Also national church is."

"We do this through our state and national church headquarters. Hopefully we inform them."

"We aren't doing this so much as a local congregation, but through the Iowa Council of Churches, information is brought to legislators through a paid lobbyist who also works at other concerns in the legislature."

"A lot of our members belong to the AARP and other organizations for the aging."

"We have a 'committee on publication' office - Des Moines that funnels all information regarding legislation and publicity."

"Through communication to legislators. But I feel this is an area that needs strengthening."

"Not locally."

"It is not the churches' business to 'enlighten' the legislators."

"Only on an individual basis."

WHAT PROGRAMS AND SERVICES FOR OLDER PEOPLE, NOT NOW AVAILABLE DO YOU THINK ARE NEEDED IN THE CHURCH AND THE COMMUNITY?

"I think that there is an abundance of programs and services now available to older people. There is need for taxation relief for those of very limited income and property holdings, more housing available to those of modest means, equal employment opportunity and adequate emergency medical care beyond Medicaid and Medicare. But the chief need, as I see it, is a better program of information to the older people about the services already available, which do not know about or know so little about that they are unable to take advantage of them."

"Making use of their real talents - not just make work. Let them help more in supplementing teaching, tutoring, etc. - connect the need with the person. Handicraft. Visitation - connect youth with 'foster grandparents'."

"The assurance of a good transportation system."

"What is most needed, as I see it, is people contact by a caring community."

"Regular drop-in centers, open at any time of day or evening, where the elderly may drop in for creative activities and conversation. Better transportation facilities. Reduced rates for movies and restaurants."

"We could have a senior citizens group. We need something more than just an 'eating' group."

"There is a need for a 'caring' ministry that serves the needs of older persons to listen, share and care about how the older person feels."

"I am not aware of low rent adequate housing available to older people in Ames. This may be available but not known to me. Some four-plex apartments at low cost might be of great help to senior citizens on low incomes."

"None."

"None are needed. The church needs a year-around visitation program."

"Social events."

WHAT OTHER THOUGHTS DO YOU HAVE ABOUT HELPING IMPROVE LIFE IN THE LATER YEARS IN THE COMMUNITY AND STATE?

"Consideration might be given to a community wide 'Check-up-day' - an 'Autumn Clinic' - or 'Searchlight on Services for Golden Aged' - on which churches and social service agencies cooperate in a day of providing information on services available now in the community. News media would publicize the event thoroughly, churches would provide transportation to the older people, and booths would be set up dramatizing what is being done presently. They would be staffed by persons able to answer pertinent questions and with some kind of visual aids on hand. Somewhere a questionnaire would be administered to all present to determine where adequate information has been obtained and gaps of ignorance remain, so that informational follow-up could occur."

"Sense of worthwhileness - concern from others, other than Christmas, Easter, Thanksgiving, etc."

"I think the greatest need is for personal contact with older people, in their own homes, by a wide variety of people and also provision for them to be included in church and community activities."

"We could offer more counseling situations for people who are preparing to retire."

"The executive board read the questionnaire and felt that low-income housing is the biggest need for the elderly."

"There ought to be better ways to tap the vast resources and experiences of our older adults instead of putting them on the shelf. This should not just be a make-work project, but of real value to the community."

"Stop this stupid policy in both industry and government of forcing retirement on those who reach age 65, merely because of age 65."

"Hobby clubs - worthwhile service projects for elderly to do."

"None at present. I feel some of the groups in Ames are doing good work in helping fill the 'recreation gap' for older people. FISH and Meals-on-Wheels programs are useful and appreciated."

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