

Pilot program replaces dilapidated mobile homes

The first thing Mary Buchmann did after she moved into her new mobile home last fall was sit on her couch to admire her living room.

“I just sat in here amazed,” she says.

The 67-year-old Colville resident and business owner was the first to participate in a three-month, state-funded pilot program that replaced four local mobile homes that had fallen into such disrepair that they posed a health or safety threat to residents. The project prioritized requests from families with children and from seniors.

Mary’s old mobile home was deemed beyond repair with holes in the floors, rotten skirting, electrical problems and mice. The critters would get in through a gap at the porch and chew through the walls and wiring.

“There were a lot of things wrong with it and I didn’t have money to fix it,” says Mary, who has been raising her two teenage granddaughters on a small income that includes proceeds from her salvage shop, Appliances, Parts and More.

“Business has been very poor this last year,” she adds.

So when Rural Resources told her she might qualify for a new mobile home, she didn’t have to think too long and hard.

She and her granddaughters moved in after Thanksgiving. The new home is better built and has more floor space, a utility room, a big tub and a nice, comfortable living room. Rural Resources even moved her wood stove from the old place to the new to make things extra cozy.

“I just think this is such a good program,” Mary says. “I’m so thankful for all that they have done for us.”



Although no additional funding is currently available for the Mobile Home Replacement Program, you can learn more about other Rural Resources housing programs by calling 509-684-8421 or visiting the Web site at www.ruralresources.org.



...in Action

Helping people, changing lives

Winter 2009



Dutch Loftis delivers a healthy lunch as a volunteer for our local Meals on Wheels.

Meals On Wheels delivers food, comfort and company

For Bernie and Terry Richardson of Kettle Falls, Meals On Wheels is nothing short of a blessing.

“I’m not able to do the things I used to do,” says Terry, who is disabled along with her husband. The couple looks forward to the hot and tasty meals they get three times a week. “Sometimes I don’t have much of an appetite, but Bernie does, and the dinners are pretty good.”

Meals On Wheels, a federal food assistance program provided locally by Rural Resources, can mean the difference between health and hunger for more than 120 vulnerable, home-bound seniors in the Tri-County area.

Last year, Rural Resources Tri-County Senior Nutrition Program provided nearly 11,000 hot, frozen and liquid meals to elders in need, and

that number is expected to grow as more seniors on fixed incomes require support to meet rising living expenses. About 64 percent of the funding for Meals On Wheels comes from government sources, but the rest must be made up in community donations, fund raising and special projects.

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Terry Richardson welcomes Meals on Wheels volunteer Sharlene Lofts.

So no senior goes hungry



Rural Resource’s annual March For Meals Walk-a-thon is **Thursday, March 19**, and we’re hoping for a hearty turnout. All proceeds benefit our Tri-County Senior Nutrition Program, which provides Meals On Wheels and other food assistance services to older adults.

“Without community support, we wouldn’t be able to meet the growing demand for home-delivered meals,” says Senior Nutrition Program Manager Anita Sailor.

So collect those pledges, recruit your buddies and get ready to walk with us from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., starting in the parking lot of Booth & LaDuke Motors in Colville. One loop takes about 30 minutes, and you can go at your own pace. For pledge forms and information on this and other local events during National Nutrition Month, call our Senior Nutrition Office at 509-684-8421 or 1-800-873-5889. Forms will also be available at our Colville Office (956 S. Main) or on the day of the walk at our booth.

Meals On Wheels stems hunger and isolation

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“Our goal is to provide home-delivered meals to every eligible person in the Tri-County area, but we can’t do that without the community’s support,” says Anita Sailor, senior nutrition program manager with Rural Resources.

To qualify for the services, recipients must be 60 or older or married to someone 60 or older and determined by staff to be “nutritionally at-risk”, meaning they are primarily homebound with a limited support system. The food and supplements are free, but recipients are asked to make suggested donations.

Older adults who are under- or malnourished are more likely to have limited daily activities and poor health, according to a landmark study sponsored by the Meals On Wheels Association of America Foundation. The effects of “food insecurity” can be compared to being 14 years older, so a 64-year-old suffering hunger is likely to have the activity limitations of a 78-year-old, the study found.

Meals on Wheels delivers more than just food, says Anita. “Homebound seniors are prone to isolation and depression. For many, the friendly visit from a Meals On Wheels volunteer might be their only contact during the day.”

Lisa Brozik, owner of the Little Gallea Restaurant, supplies the meals that go out to seniors in Kettle Falls and Colville. She’s paid by Rural Resources, but that’s not her only reward for participating in the program. She likes to think that her meals boost spirits and bring peace of mind, for recipients and their families.

“Most of the people who get Meals On Wheels aren’t able to cook for themselves,” she says. “They’ve had so many things taken away from them. This program gives them something back and brings them a little happiness.”

Terry Richardson couldn’t agree more. “When you’re in need, you’re just so thankful there’s something like this out there.”



‘In Action’ photography courtesy of Valerie Lamont



The Little Gallea Restaurant (above and below) prepares tasty, delicious meals for local seniors. Ferry County Memorial Hospital, Newport Hospital and St. Joseph’s Hospital of Chewelah also prepare meals for a total of more than 120 seniors in the Tri-County area.



Since 1965, Rural Resources has helped residents of Northeastern Washington help themselves and each other. Through education, resources and support, we offer real hope to children, seniors and families, working to create a strong and stable community for us all. Contact us at 509-684-8421. On the Web at www.ruralresources.org.

Get active, live better!

It’s no secret that exercise is one of the most important parts to leading a longer and healthier life.

But what about bingo?

Rural Resources urges seniors not only to incorporate exercise, but also social activities into their daily and weekly routines. The results of increased exercise and social activity, they say, will keep seniors in their prime far longer than otherwise.

Many seniors wonder how much exercise they should be doing.

According to the National Institute on Aging, there are four main types of exercise that seniors are recommended to incorporate into their lives:

First, seniors should try to participate in endurance activities, such as walking, jogging, biking, swimming, aerobics – even dancing – for at least 30 minutes a day. The level of activity should be vigorous, causing you to the exercise immediately. If daily exercise is a strain, start doing endurance activities two or three times a week and build up to daily.

Second, seniors ought to perform strengthening exercises that help build and maintain all the muscles groups. Weight training is a popular form of strengthening exercise. Pilates is also a strengthening activity with increasing popularity amongst men and women of all ages.

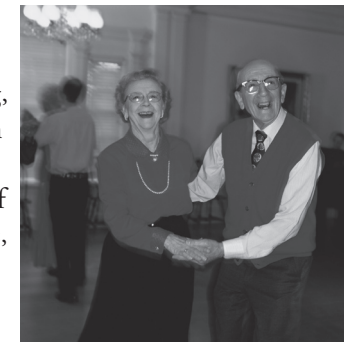
After endurance and strengthening exercises, it is important for seniors to stretch for periods of 15 to 30 minutes at a time so the muscles have a chance to relax. Stretching also promotes flexibility.

Lastly, balance exercises, such as standing on one foot, or practicing heel to toe steps, are excellent for preventing falls, a leading cause of injury in seniors.

It is important to consult a physician before starting any exercise program.

There are many Web sites full of information about exercise programs, including the National Institute on Aging, AARP and others.

For more information about programs available through Rural Resources, visit www.ruralresources.org, or call 509-684-8421.



ActionSteps

By Barry Lamont

During this very cold winter, at a time when more and more families are struggling to put food on the table and keep a roof overhead, many of our Northeast Washington neighbors are sleeping a little easier – all thanks to you.

Rural Resources sent a letter to members of our community this past November, telling you that “working families, retired seniors, single moms – those who once considered themselves middle class like most of us – are facing dire decisions that can leave them homeless, hopeless and literally out in the cold.” We asked for your help in giving them a hand up, not a hand-out, to empower them to take control of their lives.

And, wow, did you respond!

More than \$6,000 in tax deductible donations poured into Rural Resources. That money enabled us to immediately respond to or prevent crisis situations caused by the record December snowfall. Our transportation department came to the rescue of people whose lives depended on getting to the doctor for kidney dialysis or other medical conditions. We shoveled driveways, cleared off roofs and plowed out roadways so that medically fragile and isolated seniors could get emergency services if they needed them. We kept people from going hungry and made sure families stayed warm and safe.

If we would have had to seek state funds or find other sources of crisis funding when we were all up to our eyebrows in icicles, we’d still be wading through the red tape or waiting for a commission to study the problem! Instead, your generous donations gave us an immediate source of cash so that we could help our neighbors in need.

I’m grateful, but I’m not surprised. We’ve always believed in the compassion of our community and in the power of working together to help others. Those of you who sent in your checks proved it to us once again. From the bottom of my heart, thank you.

And speaking of gratitude, I believe we all owe a big thank-you for the federal economic stimulus funding that already is creating new jobs right here in Ferry, Pend Oreille and Stevens Counties. Although we are still awaiting details, we know that Rural Resources alone will be hiring several new positions for our job training and weatherization programs – that’s money and jobs that stay right here in Northeast Washington to help us all make it through this recession. Stay tuned for more!