

# COLORADO COMMISSION ON AGING



ANNUAL REPORT  
State Fiscal Year July 1, 2003 – June 30, 2004

Mary Jane Hangs, Chair

## **Information about the Colorado Commission on Aging**

The Older Coloradans Act provides authority for the Colorado Commission on Aging to carry out the following purposes:

- Conduct, and encourage other organizations to conduct studies of the problems of the state's older people;
- Assist governmental and private agencies to coordinate their efforts on behalf of the aging and aged in order to reduce duplication and waste of effort;
- Promote and aid in the establishment of local programs and services for the aging and aged. The Commission shall assist governmental and private agencies by designing surveys that may be used locally to determine needs of older people; by recommending the creation of services; by collecting and distributing information on aging; and by assisting public and private organizations in all ways the Commission deems appropriate.
- Conduct promotional activities and programs of public education on issues facing the aging;
- Review existing aging programs and make recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly for improvement in such programs;
- Advise and make recommendations to the State Department, the State Office on Aging, created pursuant to part 2 of this article, on the problems, programs, and services for the aging and aged.

### **SFY 2003-2004 Membership**

The Commission consists of seventeen members appointed by the Governor, with the consent of the Senate. Two members must be appointed from each congressional district (one from each major political party and when a vacancy in District 4 occurs, one member must be from west of the continental divide). One member must be appointed from the state at-large, one member must be appointed from among the membership of the senate and one member must be appointed from among the membership of the house. All members are appointed for terms of four years each, commencing July 1 in the year of appointment. Effective July 1, 2003, Commission membership includes:

#### **Congressional Districts**

Danette Reitz (District 1-D)  
Joseph Sims (District 1-R)  
Bruce Eller (District 2-D)  
Barbara Martig (District 2-R)  
Wilfred Martinez (District 3-D)  
Mary Jane Hangs (District 3-R)  
Scott Holwick (District 4-D)  
Jerry Wathen (District 4-R)  
Steve Bender (District 5-D)  
Richard Larsen (District 5-R)  
Zach Sahker (District 6-D)  
Daphne Bernstein (District 6-R)  
Marian Fairbank (District 7 – R)  
Kathleen McSheehy (District 7 – D)

#### **Member At-Large**

Kathy Turley - R

#### **Senate Representative**

Honorable Paula Sandoval-D

#### **House Representative**

Honorable William Sinclair-R

### **Contact Information**

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**SFY 03-04 Commissioners:**

Back Row (L to R): Danette Reitz, Gerry Wathen, Bruce Eller, Scott Holwick, Kathy Turley, Zach Sahker, Rich Larsen, Steve Bender, Joe Sims.

Front Row (L to R): Barb Martig, Daphne Bernstein, Mary Jane Hangs, Jeanette Hensley, Marian Fairbank, Wilfred Martinez

Not pictured: Sen. Paula Sandoval, Kathleen McSheehy, Rep. William Sinclair, Jamie Taylor

## **Mission**

The mission of the Colorado Commission on Aging (CCOA) is to inform and advise decision-makers and to advocate for better quality of life for all seniors.

## **Authority and Appropriation**

The CCOA is established under the authority of the Older Coloradans Act (Sections 26-11-100.1 to 26-11-106) to serve as the primary advisory body on all matters affecting older persons. The CCOA is a volunteer organization of seventeen people appointed by the Governor and approved by the Senate committee to serve for four years and not more than two terms. There is a Republican and a Democrat representing of the six Congressional Districts, one at-large Commissioner, and one member each of different parties from the State Senate and House.

In fiscal year 2003-2004, the Legislature appropriated federal and state general funds to the Commission to carry out its statutory responsibilities. The source for federal funds is the Older Americans Act. Members of the CCOA do not receive compensation for their services, but are reimbursed for expenses incurred by the performance of their official duties. Reimbursements are provided in accordance with the State's fiscal rules and policies.

## Officers

Officers for Fiscal Year July 1, 2003 – June 30, 2004 were: **Mary Jane Hangs**, Chair; **Stephen M. Bender**, Vice Chair; **Barbara Martig**, Legislative Chair; and **Richard L. Larsen**, Past President.

## Commission Roles and Responsibilities

The Colorado Commission on Aging is comprised of four committees:  
**Executive, Policy/Legislative, Community Relations, and Strategic Planning.**

Following are the roles of each committee.

**Colorado Commission on Aging's** role is to:

1. Represent all of Colorado's 60+ population and their caregivers with specific focus on rural and frail elderly.
2. Address health and social needs and issues, using a broad-based approach.
3. Support or oppose issues through education, dialogue, and advocacy activities.
4. Focus on understanding the issues and needs of Colorado's 60+ population; understand federal policies as they impact Colorado and its 60+ population; and maintain awareness of other states' programs as these may provide ideas or models for serving Colorado's 60 + population, including the study of demographic changes.
5. Collaboratively work with the Colorado Department of Human Services and the Aging and Adult Services Division, recognizing that occasions may arise at which time Department/Division and Commission perspectives may not be in harmony. Recommend state aging priorities to the Division of Aging and Adult Services, Colorado Department of Human Services, Governor and Legislature.
6. Take positions on selected issues and collaborate with the efforts of other community-based senior organizations.
7. Support activities such as public hearings and recognition programs as available and appropriate.
8. Review issues related to the Old Age Pension Health Care Program.
9. Support changing the \$10 million cap of the Old Age Pension Health Care Program through broad-based support to be sought from Colorado's aging services network. This includes the possibility of recommending a constitutional amendment to address this issue.
10. Participate in public hearings in conjunction with the Area Agencies on Aging and the State Unit on Aging in the development of the State's 4-year plan. Review Area Agency on Aging's (AAA) programs and funding to address issues and priorities for Planning and Service Areas (PSA) in Congressional Districts.
11. Initiate and participate in a Colorado Conference on Aging activity, to coincide with national efforts of a White House Conference on Aging to be held October 23 – 26, 2005.
12. Be knowledgeable of priority issues in aging at the National Level and make recommendations when appropriate including the review of Long-Term Care reform in reference to Medicare/Medicaid changes.
13. Conduct Older Americans Month event. Sponsor and promote the Centenarian Program. Commissioners are actively involved in identifying Centenarians, and participate in the recognition for seniors who are celebrating their 100 or 100 plus birthdays.

## **Committee Roles and Responsibilities**

### **Executive Committee** role is:

1. Provide leadership to Commission members concerning duties/responsibilities and strategic planning.
2. Provide input in the hiring of a new State Aging and Adult Services Division Director when necessary, and serve as the liaison with the Division of Aging and Adult Services.
3. Be empowered to act on emergency matters as intervals between regular Commission meetings, such action to be reviewed at the next Commission meeting.
4. Develop the CCOA meeting agendas.

### **Policy/Legislative Committee** role is:

1. Stay informed and involved on legislative initiatives for older citizens of Colorado.
2. Collaborate with organizations that represent the interests and needs of Older Coloradans.
3. Monitor initiatives for Improving Quality of Care in Nursing Homes/Assisted Living Residences.
4. Provide input to Colorado Department of Human Services, Aging and Adult Services Division and the Department of Health Care Policy and Financing in maintaining existing programs for older citizens in Colorado as legislators struggle with budget shortfall.
5. Participate and educate public officials, the general public and older citizens in Colorado on senior issues and initiatives pertaining to legislation.
6. Review and provide input on Long-Term Care Reform.
7. Participate in legislative action organizations/groups as appropriate.
8. Advocate for Old Age Pension recipients as well as programs.

### **Community Relations Committee** role is:

1. Sponsor the annual Allen M.A. Buckingham Senior Leadership Legacy Lecture Award.
2. Sponsor the Older Americans Month Centenarian Celebration. (This year it was held in Durango).
3. Participate in Senior Days at the Capitol.
4. Participate in the Eastern Plains Legislative Speak Out.
5. Participate in the Western Slope Legislative Speak Out.

### **Strategic Planning Committee** was developed this year. The committee's role is:

1. Set direction and priorities for the Commission.
2. Establish goals and objectives.
3. Establish action plans on achieving the goals and objectives.

## **2003-2004 Meetings**

The CCOA meetings for the fiscal year July 1 2003 through June 30, 2004 included six Commission meetings at the Warwick Hotel in Denver, and one meeting in Durango. These meetings provided the Commission the opportunity to review legislation, state and federal public policies of social programs for citizens sixty and older in our state.

As a result of these meetings the Commission was able to meet its mandated purpose by providing input to the Departments of Health Care Policy and Financing and Human Services, Division of Aging & Adult Services, concerning program changes, budgetary cuts, and policy issues.

## **2003-2004 Fiscal Year Review**

Fiscal year 2003-2004 presented another year of significant fiscal challenges for social programs to support the quality of life for older Colorado citizens. The Commission's focus was to collaborate with state-wide senior advocacy representatives to encourage our Legislators, the Colorado Department of Health Care Policy and Financing, and the Colorado Department of Human Services to keep existing Medicaid programs intact; to encourage state departments to maintain the integrity of programs for the frail, elderly, blind, handicapped, disabled, most vulnerable populations, and low-income seniors.

### **I. 2003 Legislation/Policy Decisions Impacting Older Citizens of Colorado**

#### **Budget Reductions – State Funding for Senior Services**

With another severe budget deficit facing our state, the Legislators targeted to reduce the four and one half million dollars state funding for senior services by three million dollars. The Division of Aging and Adult Services was able to get one million dollars of this restored. Representative Spradley was successful in sponsoring an amendment to restore an additional five hundred thousand dollars. Additional amendments sponsored by Senators Hillman and Tapia were defeated. The one and one half million-dollar reduction for these important senior services went into effect July 1, 2004. The CCOA did not support these cuts.

The Commission reviewed summary sheets from the sixteen different Area Agencies on Aging showing the major services they provide to citizens in their areas and the impact the loss of funding will have on these important programs and those served.

#### **Maintenance of Effort**

The maintenance of effort agreement the Department of Human Services has with the Social Security Administration was 4.3 million dollars short for calendar year 2003. Cuts in Home Care Allowance and Aid to the Needy Disabled/Colorado Supplement budgets in FY '03 contributed to this. The Commission reviewed with the Division of Aging and Adult Services how to prevent such shortfalls in the coming fiscal years.

## **Fitzsimons State and Veterans Nursing Home**

The Commission received several briefings from John Daurio, Director of the Office of Adult, Disability, and Rehabilitation Services on the state and federal deficiencies at the Fitzsimons State and Veterans Nursing Home, and the steps being taken to correct those deficiencies. Mr. Daurio assured the Commission that the JBC and the Governor provided periodic reviews and oversight of the facility and would not compromise one program or facility over another.

## **ULTC-100.2 (Uniform Long-Term Care Assessment Form)**

The Department of Health Care Policy and Financing changed the Uniform Long Term Care 100 Assessment tool, which is used to determine eligibility for the Medicaid long-term care programs. Beginning May 1, 2003 the Department implemented use of the ULTC 100.2 that was designed to tighten the eligibility criteria for Medicaid's long-term care programs. The implementation of the assessment tool was modified to place increased responsibilities on the Single Entry Point (SEP) agencies. The SEP's would now conduct all assessments including those done in hospitals and nursing facilities, be empowered to determine approval/disapproval of an applicant, and would assume case management responsibilities for the Home & Community Based Services program for persons with a major mental illness diagnosis (HCBS-MI).

## **Volume 10**

The Commission reviewed with the Division of Aging and Adult Services and the AAA's proposed revisions of Volume 10. Specifically the changes in the Nutrition, and Nutrition counseling programs. The Commission also reviewed the ten percent carry over policy implementation for each region and how funds if not expended can be carried over to the other regions.

## **Legislation**

During the legislative session, the Commission collaborated with state-wide stakeholders in trying to educate legislators on the needs of older citizens in our state, the importance of adequately funding these important programs, and the need to focus on preventive health care supportive programs such as Home Community Based Services to keep people in their homes and out of costly health care settings.

The Commission reviewed and discussed the effects of TABOR and Amendment 23. Each amendment presented to the state legislative body was reviewed and a vote taken by the Commission on whether to support, monitor, or not support the amendment.

## II. Centenarians Celebrations

The Centenarian Celebration is a promotional activity sponsored by the Commission to celebrate the lifetime achievements of Centenarians living in our state and to focus attention on the political and social issues of aging. The celebration recognizes older citizens who have achieved the age of one hundred or more by awarding each centenarian a certificate prepared by the Commission and co-signed by the Commission Chair and Governor Owens. It is estimated that there are over five hundred centenarians in Colorado.

On behalf of Governor Owens, the Commission recognized centenarians ranging in age from 100 to 104 at a reception sponsored by the Commission hosted by the La Plata Senior Center on May 13, 2004. This year the celebration was part of the Commission's scheduled meeting in Durango. Each Centenarian was presented with a certificate signed by the Governor and the Commission Chair, Mary Jane Hangs, and a letter from Sen. Ben Nighthorse-Campbell. The Centenarians, family members, and those in attendance enjoyed the celebration. One Centenarian in Cortez and one in Pagosa Springs who were unable to travel to Durango were individually visited and presented with the certificate signed by the Governor on Saturday, May 15<sup>th</sup>.



Pictured: Centenarian Maria Atencio, 104, of Ignacio, dancing during the 2004 Centenarians Celebration, held at the Durango/La Plata Senior Center. Family members drove to Colorado from as far away as Georgia to celebrate this great day with her.



### **III. Allen Buckingham Senior Leadership Legacy Lecture**

On September 12, 2003, the Commission sponsored the 10<sup>th</sup> Allen M. A. Buckingham Senior Leadership Legacy award at the Warwick Hotel, Denver, Colorado. This year the Commission was pleased to recognize the contribution of Fern Osborne, Past President, Colorado Senior Lobby. A few of Fern's many accomplishments are: In 1992 she began lobbying for AARP, serving as moderator of the Capital City Task Force and State Legislative Chair. Fern represented AARP in the Leaders Council. From the Leaders Council the Older Coloradoans Coalition was formed to secure support for the Older Coloradoans Fund, a state funded program for seniors. Fern served as a co-chair of the Coalition. In 1999 Fern was elected President of the Colorado Senior Lobby a position she held until August 2003. Fern has played a major role in lobbying to successfully pass state legislation benefiting many older Coloradoans.

The Senior Legacy Lecture was awarded to Allen Buckingham posthumously in December 1998 and the event was renamed in his honor. Allen promoted the needs of older person, especially that they live in dignity, have freedom and choice and realize full and active participation in their society. The spirit of his legacy is celebrated annually. The above criteria is used by the commission in selecting each year's recipient.

### **IV. Education**

The Commission recognizes that continuing education on public issues, state and federal programs, is crucial to our ability to function as a credible advisory board. As such, the Commission is dedicated and committed to make education a part of each of the scheduled meetings. Some of the educational programs provided to the Commissioners and the public Include:

- Senior Community Services Employment Program (Title V Older Americans Act)
- Colorado's Senior Health Insurance Assistance Program
- Reports from the Colorado Association of Area Agencies on Aging
- Older driver's issues
- Region IV AAA Family Caregiver Support Center program
- Protecting At-Risk Adults
- Medicare's Prescription Medication Benefit
- TABOR & Amendment 23 Fiscal Issues
- New Assisted Living Residence Regulations
- State Veterans Nursing Home – Fitzsimons Survey Issues



**COLORADO COMMISSION ON AGING**  
**Meeting Schedule**  
**Fiscal Year 2003-2004**

July 24 & 25, 2003	Annual Meeting - Warwick Hotel	Denver
September 11 & 12, 2003	Allen Buckingham Awards - Warwick Hotel	Denver
November 6, 2003	State Veterans Nursing Home - Fitzsimons	Aurora
February 12, 2004	CCOA Meeting - Warwick Hotel	Denver
March 24, 2004	Senior Days at the Capital - State Capital	Denver
April 8 & 9, 2004	CCOA Meeting - Warwick Hotel	Denver
May 13 & 14, 2004	Centenarians Celebration	Durango



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