



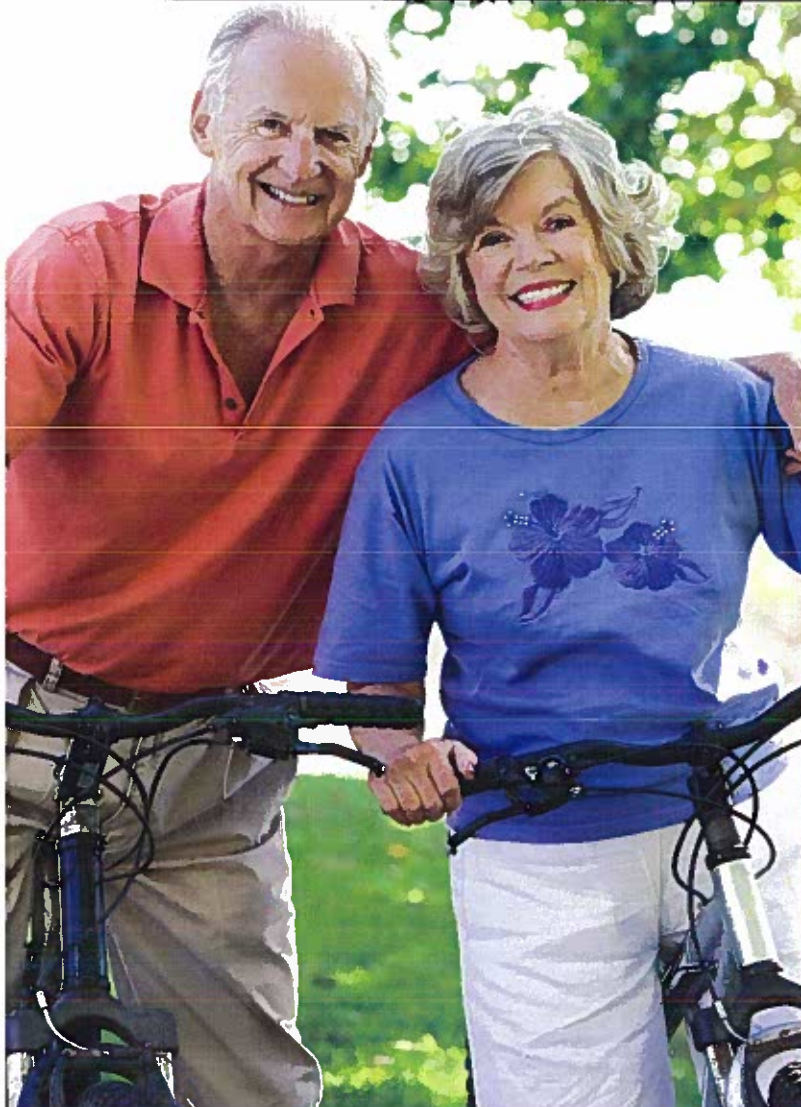
Colorado Department  
of Human Services  
*people who help people*

# COLORADO COMMISSION ON AGING

SUPPORTING COLORADO'S SENIOR POPULATION

# 2009/10 ANNUAL REPORT

[COLORADOAGING.COM](http://COLORADOAGING.COM)





## Report from the Chair, Colorado Commission on Aging

I was elected as the Chair of the Colorado Commission on Aging (CCOA) at our Annual Meeting in Denver in July, 2009. It was with great excitement that we began the next years work to serve all seniors in the state of Colorado. The Commission was established in 1964 to inform and advise decision makers and to advocate for the quality of life of all seniors, especially the low-income, rural and frail elderly.

The CCOA is a volunteer organization consisting of seventeen people appointed by the Governor and approved by the Health and Human Services committee. Each commissioner serves up to two four-year terms. A Republican and a Democrat represent each of the seven Congressional Districts, one at-large commissioner and one member from the State Senate and House. This year I would like to welcome our newest commissioner, **Mr. Frederick Calovich**, D-District 7. In addition, we would like to thank three commissioners whose terms have ended this year: **Ms. Barbara Martig**, R-District 2, **Mr. Jerry Wathen**, R-District 4, and **Senator Paula Sandoval**, D-Senator. We have very much appreciated the role you served on the commission during your tenure!

The CCOA not only works closely with the legislators, but with the State Unit on Aging, local Area Agencies on Aging and other organizations that promote senior issues. In addition, the members of the CCOA assist in any way possible with activities at our local Senior Centers to promote nutritional meals, in-home services, transportation, legal services, and family and caregiver support programs. These important services improve the quality of life and independence for thousands of elderly seniors throughout Colorado.

I personally invite you to attend the CCOA meetings so that you can share your concerns and in addition, become better informed about senior issues so you can join us in advocacy efforts for all older adults.

With warm regards,

– *Maureen Robinson, Chair*

## Accomplishments, Awards and More ...

From its beginnings in 1964, the CCOA has stayed true to the course and its ongoing mission, which is to inform and advise decision-makers, and to advocate for Colorado seniors' quality of life. This past year was no exception. Following is a brief overview of our 2009/2010 endeavors in pursuit of those goals.

### Senior Day at the Capitol – February 24, 2010



Senior Day at the Capitol invites seniors from around the state to come meet and greet their legislators and become educated regarding upcoming legislation that may affect seniors in Colorado. This year, as always, it was standing room only in the Supreme Court Chambers. Governor Ritter addressed the group and then presented an honorary remembrance plaque to the family of Fern Osborne, who recently passed away. Fern was active in many senior organizations and truly believed in the concept of Senior Power! There were many legislators that addressed the audience including the State Treasurer, President of the Senate, Speaker of the House, Senate Minority leader, and House Minority Leader.

### Centenarian Celebration

Each year, CCOA sponsors the annual Centenarian Celebration during the Older Americans Month in May. The event recognizes Colorado seniors who have reached their milestone **100th (or older) birthday**.

This year's function was held on May 14, 2010 at the Inn at Garden Plaza in Colorado Springs.



This special day continues a tradition that annually recognizes individuals' lifelong achievement, and focuses attention on the political and social issues associated with aging. Each of the recognized 9 centenarians offered up the unique perspective that could only come from a century of living, learning and, in the process, enriching their respective Colorado communities.

### Additional Resources

Colorado Department of Human Resources: [www.cdhs.state.co.us](http://www.cdhs.state.co.us)

Colorado Commission on Aging: [www.coloradoaging.com](http://www.coloradoaging.com)

Silverprint: [www.silverprintcolorado.org](http://www.silverprintcolorado.org)

Old Age Pension: [www.coloradoaging.com](http://www.coloradoaging.com)

*All CCOA meetings are open to the public and we encourage you to attend. Please call 303-866-2663 or visit our website [www.coloradoaging.com](http://www.coloradoaging.com) for a schedule of upcoming meetings.*

**CCOA volunteers provide their leadership**

## 16th Annual Allen Buckingham Senior Leadership Legacy Award – Marian Smith, winner



Marian Smith - recipient

Named for Allen M.A. Buckingham, who served on the CCOA from 1986 to 1998 and additionally held other key positions in his career, the Allen Buckingham Senior Leadership Legacy Award is given to a senior who, having made a noteworthy contribution to the senior population in Colorado, is nominated by his or her peers. Allen promoted the needs of older people

– especially helping to ensure that they live in dignity, have freedom and choice, and realize full and active participation in their society. The spirit of his service is celebrated annually in this award.

The 2009 winner of the award is Marian Smith. Following are some of the senior areas in which Marian has made a difference:

### *A leader in the field of aging –*

- 1962 Founding member of Colorado Activity Professionals Association and Activity Director at Westland Manor Nursing Home
- 1973 Established a Steering Committee that created the RSVP Retired Senior Volunteers Program
- 1974 Founding member of the Area Advisory Committee on Aging at the Denver Regional Council of Governments. Served as Chairman 10 times during the past 34 years.
- 1978 Established Steering committees which created the Senior Resource Center, as well as the Jefferson County Council on Aging

Member of the Colorado Division of Insurance Advisory Committee which recommended the establishment of the Colorado Long-Term Care Options System

*Promoting a better quality of life for seniors –* All of the above organizations allow us to better serve senior citizens today. Without the dedication of Marian and her colleagues to establish policy, State law, advisory committees, county councils etc, seniors would not have the quality of life they have today. There would be no conduits to give assistance to older adults. She has advocated for seniors for 55 years.

*Major accomplishments –* Besides all of her accomplishments above, one of her proudest accomplishment was in the RSVP organization when she convinced Board members that people who received services could also be volunteers. Over these many years she has presented the case for seniors to the public, organizations of all kinds, as well as politicians at all levels. She continues to teach at Arapahoe Community College.

Obviously Marian played an extremely large role in the development of aging programs in Colorado. One of her motto's was: *You don't look for what is wrong, but rather what is right, and decide how you can build on that to create a better life for the resident.*

## Legislative Happenings

During the 2010 legislative session, programs affecting Colorado seniors were targeted for **reductions** to share the burden in state budget cuts. Though the legislative committee worked diligently to minimize these cuts, many of them had a significant impact on seniors' health care and income.

These included:

- ▶ the elimination of the senior property tax exemption
- ▶ the reduction of Medicaid reimbursements rates
- ▶ a \$1.7 million reduction in pharmacy reimbursement
- ▶ a decrease in nursing home reimbursement rates
- ▶ the closure of beds in the nursing facility in Grand Junction

Since there was not a cost of living increase in Social Security, the grant increase for Old Age Pensioners was not awarded.

Unfortunately, during this very difficult economic climate, senior programs have shouldered over \$33 million in direct cuts.

The Colorado Commission on Aging will **continue to advocate for future funding**, including the Old Age Pension Health Medical Fund. The legislative committee will continue to work with and educate legislators to champion the bills that serve and protect Colorado's seniors.

## A Grateful Farewell

We, the Commissioners, want to extend a **farewell and thank you to Jeanette Hensley** as she retires as Director of Aging and Adult Services for the state of Colorado. In her position, she served as our liaison to the Governor's office as well as the Department of Human Services. Her dedication was unwavering and her vast knowledge of state services and funding sources was invaluable.



We wish her the very best as she begins the next chapter in her life.

Serving the Commission in the interim will be **Todd Coffey**, Manager of the State Unit on Aging, Colorado Department of Human Services. Welcome Todd!

## Strategic Planning Committee

The strategic planning committee provides a key component to the commission by identifying specific programs or issues that we can study, discuss and identify a plan of action. With this approach, we can encourage possible policy change by addressing these issues on a regular basis. As a newly added standing agenda item, this will allow us more time for group discussion and to identify issues that are taking place statewide that we may need to be involved. Previous issues identified for consideration include: transportation safety for seniors (including safe driving and road safety), as well as Senior Friendly Communities.

# COMMISSIONERS



*1st Row, left to right: Maureen Robinson, Fred Calovich, Jeanette Hensley, Vivian Stovall, Barb Martig  
2nd Row, left to right: Sen. Paula Sandoval, Jamie Malone, Sheila Casey, Alice Langley, Deb Stewart, Gretchen Cervený  
3rd Row, left to right: Karl Aguilera, Steve Bender, Russ DenBraber, Linda Sanden, Mark Shelton  
Not pictured: Rep. Tom Massey, Jerry Wathen, Dr. Karyn Leible*

## **Aging Network Visioning Sessions**

Participants of the Colorado Network on Aging, consisting of members from the Administration on Aging (AoA), Adult Protective Services (APS), Aging Policy Advisory Council (APAC), Colorado Commission on Aging (CCOA), Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), Silverprint Colorado, and the State Unit on Aging (SUA) came together to create a Practical Vision for the Department.

The Participatory Strategic Planning was a four step workshop series with a preliminary Environmental Scan Activity. Each session was done in the basic workshop format described above.

In order for everyone to have a better understanding of the many diverse organizations who were part of the planning process, the group participated in a quick overview analysis of each of these partner organizations.

The vision of an organization was held in part by all of its members. This workshop seeks to bring all together in a shared picture of the future. The Practical Vision Workshop was the response statement of hope within the given environment.

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### **The Practical Vision Workshop asks the questions:**

What do we want to see in place in five years?

What are the issues and obstacles that block our progress towards our shared vision?

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## **Healthcare Reform – WHY and WHAT?**

The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act was passed with the intent to provide greater savings and increased quality health care and to ensure accountability throughout the health care system.

**Colorado:** As stated by Governor Bill Ritter – The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (the Federal Health Care Reform Bill) that was signed by President Obama on March 23, 2010 will offer Coloradoans the following benefits:

- ▶ **Allows** Colorado to provide access to affordable Health Care
- ▶ **Lowers** the cost for families and small business
- ▶ **Provides** coverage for 500,000 who are presently uninsured
- ▶ **Outlaws** discrimination against persons with pre-existing conditions
- ▶ **Strengthens** the economy and creates new jobs – as many as 23,000 by 2019
- ▶ **Provides** a \$250 rebate in 2010 to seniors who enter the gap in Medicare prescription drug coverage known as the “doughnut hole”

For additional information or questions in Colorado please go to the following:

- ▶ [www.HealthReform.Gov](http://www.HealthReform.Gov)  
National Healthcare Reform
- ▶ [www.Colorado.gov/hcpf](http://www.Colorado.gov/hcpf)  
Co. Dept of Health Care Policy & Financing
- ▶ [www.cdphe.state.co.us](http://www.cdphe.state.co.us) – Co. Dept of Public Health & Environment
- ▶ [www.cdhs.state.co.us](http://www.cdhs.state.co.us) – Co. Department of Human Services
- ▶ Call 1-888-696-7213 – Co. State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP)