

SENIOR

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Review of your MSN key to combating fraud

FROM STAFF REPORTS
SHERIDAN SENIOR CENTER

SHERIDAN — If you receive Medicare benefits, you most likely have received a Medicare Summary Notice or MSN from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. CMS sends out MSNs for both Medicare Part A and MSNs for Medicare Part B services.

MSNs are not an invoice but a summary of doctors and professional medical service providers who have submitted claims for reimbursement from Medicare under your Medicare identification number. The statement will have your Medicare identification number in the heading and lists the doctor or services (such as physical therapy), the date the claim is being submitted (not necessarily the same date as your visit), and the amount billed to Medicare. It will also list your balance on deductibles if any apply to the services you use.

Medicare hopes that individuals will review their MSN for legitimacy. Billions of dollars are lost to Medicare fraud. The key to intervene on fraudulent claims is to have individuals help by reviewing their MSNs.

The challenge is that hard copy MSNs are mailed quarterly and it can be difficult to remember three to four months back. The trick is to organize.

One method is to set up a folder and put copies of service statements in the folder when you get home. If a service provider does not give you a service statement at

your visit, then write a note to yourself with the who, when, why and where of your visit and put this in the folder. When you receive your quarterly MSN, check the summary against your records in the folder.

MSN's are mailed quarterly but are available online immediately. The benefit of the online summary is that you can see claims being made under your Medicare number almost immediately and can compare this to your records.

Should you question a charge on your summary — or recognize that a billing to Medicare is incorrect — Medicare's Senior Medicare Patrol program is designed to help. Oversight to the SMP program is provided by the Wyoming Senior Citizens, Inc. organization that was founded in 1975.

Community SMP volunteers can help you decipher your MSN and will walk you through the process of reporting a suspicious charge to Medicare.

However, many communities do not have SMP volunteers. In Sheridan, there are two SMP volunteers. Should you wish to speak with one of these volunteers, call the Sheridan Senior Center at 672-2240 for direction on the next step.

If you see a claim for services made to you that you do not recognize, you can report the incident directly via a toll free number to the Senior Medicare Patrol at 800-856-4398.

Individuals reviewing their MSNs and reporting questionable billings to Medicare are key to combating Medicare fraud.



COURTESY PHOTO | BARB BLUE

Egging them on

Senior Center staff member Vanessa Thiele joins in on a competition between teams in the Day Break program. Day Break participants were challenged to garner the most points by successfully tossing a raw egg into a bucket of water. The activity was part of Day Break's Survivor Challenge.

CENTER STAGE |

Looking back at the Belle Fourche Rodeo

After graduating from high school in 1951, I was cowboying on a local ranch. I was sweet on a local girl that was a year younger than me. Our

friends and we decided to attend the rodeo that was scheduled for the Fourth of July at Belle Fourche, South Dakota.

I was driving a 1937 Chevy Sedan that had cost me \$300. I was flush with money since I

drove the school bus south of town my senior year of high school. The 1937 Chevy replaced the 1931 Ford Model A pickup, my first car.

There were six of us teenagers that planned on attending the Belle Fourche, South Dakota, rodeo the Fourth of July. The three girls were busy making salads and other fixings to take to the picnic before the rodeo. We boys decided that we would provide the meat for the picnic.

The other boys and I decided that the meat in the grocery store was not good and too expensive. We made up our minds that a local chicken raiser had better meat for a lot less money.

After he had gone to bed, we made a midnight requisition in his chicken house. We acquired a couple of his young fryers without paying or saying anything. We then gutted, cleaned and cut up the chickens for frying.

They next morning the girls thought that they were frying the store bought chickens for our picnic. We drove over to the Spearfish Canyon for the picnic. The picnic was great with a lot of good food. The fried chicken was exceptional and we had iced watermelon for dessert.

After the picnic it was off to the rodeo in Belle Fourche. The road was not paved and very rough.

I was young, drove fast and always in a hurry.

Consequently going so fast

over a rough road caused a rear spring to break. That slowed us down. We could only limp along to not have the tire rub on the wheel well.

We finally made it to Belle

Fourche in time for the

rodeo. We all enjoyed the

rodeo and show. The wild

horse race was exciting and

fun to watch. At that age we

spent some time at the car-

nival. After a full day, it was

time to head home.

We had about 75 miles to

get home. That was a long

75 miles. We had to crippe back only going about 30 miles per hour. We were glad to be home when we finally arrived.

I managed to scavenge a different used rear spring from a wrecked Chevy car. My friends and I put the used rear spring on my car. I could speed again without my wheel rubbing the wheel well.

I am glad that we went to the Belle Fourche rodeo and the fun that we had. Shortly after that we moved to Banner, Wyoming.

The Korean War was going full blast. The draft board was breathing down my neck and I joined the U.S. Navy before they could draft me.

After joining the U.S. Navy another person owned the 1937 Chevy. That car was transportation to the Belle Fourche rodeo and a lot of fun for a bunch of teenagers.

BOB HUFF grew up in Upton. Huff has been writing monthly for Center Stage since 2012 and is now retiring his pen with the invitation to write for Center Stage on occasion. Senior Center staff wish Huff all the best and thank him for all of his 66 wonderful stories. Center Stage is written by friends of the Senior Center for the Sheridan community. It is a collection of insights and stories related to living well at every age.

SENIOR CENTER HAPPENINGS |

• Color Your Plate! June 29 at 6 p.m. in the Senior Center Dining Room, 211 Smith St. Learn about how the color of food tells you a nutrition message! Free to the community. Presented by Georgia Boley, Senior Center Registered Dietitian. Sign up at front desk at the Senior Center or just show up.

• The Senior Center will be operating under holiday hours 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. in observance of July 4. Lunch will be served that day during normal hours, 11:30 a.m. to 12:45 p.m.

• There will be limited bus service on July 4. Please call Goose Creek Transit at 675-RIDE (7433) to arrange your travel needs.

• Antique Show and Tell on June 30. Preview items at 12:30 p.m. and general viewing at 1:00 p.m. Limit one item per person. No charge to participate or to view. Contact Jane Perkins at 672-2240 for details.

• Country and Oldies Rock and Roll Jam on June 30 from 7:00 p.m. Bring your music and instruments. Enter through the Senior Center north doors. For details, call Jane Perkins at 672-2240.

• Big Horn Canyon Boat Tour and Lunch on July 26. Sign up and payment is due by July 16. Transportation is available from Heritage Towers, the Senior Center and the Tongue River Valley Community Center.

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