

Technology for peace of mind

FROM THE SHERIDAN SENIOR CENTER

SHERIDAN — Living at home alone or living at home under incapacitation from illness, accident or aging could make living safely a challenge not previously faced. One has options to move in with the kids or into an assisted living facility prematurely.

Technology exists that supports independent living at home while providing connections should someone need it.

Technological supports vary from area to area but one does not need to jump into complicated technology to support living at home. In Sheridan County, a personal emergency response system, or PERS, is one technological option to provide access to help should an individual need such service. It is one of the simpler technological supports available to individuals.

Part of the PERS system includes a pendant the individual wears at all times to ensure help can be called when needed.

"PERS are divided into two categories depending on whether you have a telephone landline into your home or not," said Terry

Yentzer, program manager for Life Link of Sheridan County.

Yentzer points out different pendants are available based on individual circumstances and preferences. There are three different types of PERS for telephone landlines and three different types for telephone wireless systems. All of the LifeLink PERS pendants are waterproof so they can be worn in the shower or bathtub.

The "standard" PERS pendant is where an individual presses a button on the pendant they are wearing to activate a monitor in the house to call for help.

"These are good for people who live by themselves in a house or apartment and don't generally go out of the house where people can see them," said Yentzer.

Another option is an AutoAlert pendant offered by Life Link. With this option, the pendant can detect a fall and call for help automatically whether the individual presses the help button or not.

"If the AutoAlert pendant detects a fall, it will not call immediately," said Yentzer. "There is a 45-second delay. If a person can get back up to at least chair level in that



COURTESY PHOTO

Technology to support peace of mind while living at home need not be complicated. Terry Yentzer from LifeLink of Sheridan County shares how technology connected to your telephone system can allow access to personal contacts or to 911 should you need help in an emergency.

time, then the Auto Alert won't send a call," said Yentzer, who pointed out that this feature minimizes false alarms.

Many individuals who are familiar with the older

LifeLink technology may not realize that the technology has advanced. There is now a third option: the GoSafe PERS.

The GoSafe pendant combines the fall detection

features of the AutoAlert pendant and the location tracking features of a GPS, global positioning system, with the communication features of a cellphone into one pendant.

In the home, the GoSafe pendant will access a monitor in the house — just like the standard and AutoAlert pendants — to call for help. When an individual leaves the house, the GoSafe pendant uses the cellphone feature to access help.

It also activates a tracking feature to report the location on an individual who may need emergency service but who is unable to communicate their location through the pendant's cellphone feature.

"GoSafe is for more active adults who may be out away from home when a fall occurs, such as a person out walking the dog and tripped by the dog's leash," said Yentzer. The GoSafe pendant works as long as the individual is in an area of cellphone coverage.

"There is an exception and that's with the AutoAlert detects a fall without the person pressing a button," said Yentzer. "The operator will try to contact the individual through the monitor

first. If there is no contact made, then the operator will call 911 first and bypass the responders of record."

Yentzer refers to people the client lists with LifeLink as responders when help is needed. The responders can be family, friends or neighbors who live close by and can check on the client in short order. Local 911 emergency medical service is always used as backup if responders are unavailable or if the client can request EMS directly.

LifeLink supports 195 Sheridan County residents who are living in their own homes. The Sheridan County LifeLink volunteer board raises money to purchase equipment. A client pays to lease the equipment for monthly service. No long-term contracts are required so service can easily be canceled when it is no longer needed. For information, call Terry Yentzer at 751-9348.

Whether needed short term while convalescing or longer term for security or long-term support, a PERS is one of today's technological options in Sheridan to provide peace of mind for individuals and for their families.

CENTER STAGE

As we look to the future

Thank you to each of you who have been involved with the Senior Center this past year. Your support in many different forms has been beyond compare! Every minute that you have spent as a volunteer,



RINDY WEST

patron, or supporter has helped the Senior Center continue to offer services that offer stability and peace of mind for our Sheridan County communities. We can't do it all without you,

there is no doubt! There is a lot happening here at the center. I'm so thrilled that we are under construction at the Sheridan Senior Center. These are times to document in history, as we grow to meet the needs of our community seniors. You have heard that the Celebrating Generations & Building Community Campaign was very successful and this is true. Thank you to those who made it possible!

Almost every one of our service program spaces will have increased space and design capability. This means that we will be able to serve more people who come to the center for services, supports and social offering. The need was prov-

en more than five years ago and it is pretty special that we are getting closer to the point that the vision will be reality.

So you might ask, what does the center look like internally with operations with all of this taking place? Well, we continue to be thankful and at the same time challenged. We are tasked to provide services on a daily basis. In a perfect world this would be taken care of, but what adventure would that be? Instead we experience the thrill of making it all come together financially. Just this coming budget year will take into account \$130,000 cuts in grant awards from state and local sources. This is about 4 percent less than the prior year. The center is proud to operate on an already very narrow margin. There is not much we can cut on the expense side of things without cutting back on services.

These types of budget encounters keep us grounded. But one of the ways that we are hoping to limit fluctuations in the future is to grow our Loving Legacy Endowment. The board last year outlined a \$10 million in 10 years campaign to help us remain sustainable for

the long term. This goal will directly help the center as dependable revenue for the future. It sounds like a big sum, but we are currently at almost \$600,000 and by working toward that goal of \$10 million, the center can eventually become less reliant on federal and state funding mechanisms. We will better situate our organization for increased long-term sustainability.

The CG&BC Campaign was a great kick start to that and almost \$2 million from the campaign will automatically be put toward the Loving Legacy Endowment. For those who have contributed, we are forever thankful and please know how much your support and vote of confidence in our services means!

I would love to visit with you more about this effort, which already has a great start. There is no time like the present to put down roots with our organization. Thank you for what you give, our hearts are grateful.

RINDY WEST is the development director at the Sheridan Senior Center. 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

- Join us for one of three candidate forums at the Sheridan Senior Center. A forum for candidates for Sheridan mayor, City Council and county commissioners is Oct. 11, 9:30-11 a.m. Two forums for state candidates are on Oct. 12 from 12:30-2 p.m. and on Oct. 27, 5:30-7 p.m. Refreshments hosted by Sheridan Chapter 676 of AARP. The Senior Center is located at 211 Smith St.
- Free estate planning workshop for the community of all ages, Saturday, Oct. 15, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Sheridan High School, 1056 Long Drive, Sheridan. Lunch is provided by the sponsors. A call before 5 p.m. on Oct. 14 to sign up for the program would be appreciated, 672-8905. Guest speakers include Sheridan Senior Center Executive Director Carmen Rideout and area attorneys and financial planners.
- Are you getting the maximum benefits from your Medicare Part

D prescription coverage? Don't throw your money out the window or get caught in changes in 2017 that could cost you more. A review of your Medicare prescription coverage could help you stretch your dollars. Free review of your Medicare Part D prescription coverage will be available at the Senior Center. Appointments are required by calling 672-2240. Don't wait and be locked out of this valuable and free service.

- Veterans, please allow us to put your military profile on the Sheridan Senior Center's Wall of Honor. We are conducting interviews with veterans Sept. 26 to Oct. 21. Please plan to make an appointment by calling 672-2240 to share your story and be photographed to be placed on our Wall of Honor during Veterans Day week. If you have wonderful photos of you in uniform, we will scan your photo and return it to you.



"We have traveled a lot and we have not found a senior center anywhere in the U.S. that compares to this one."

— Fran Stevens-Hium



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Entrée Choice* or Soup Kiosk

Sun - Beef Pepper Steak		
Mon - Tater Tot Casserole	Beef, Tomato & Cabbage Soup	
Tue - Pork Roast/Gravy	Chicken Veggie Soup	
Wed - Swedish Meatballs	Cheesy Ham & Broccoli Soup	
Thu - Chicken Breast Fillet	Rice & Vegetable Soup	
Fri - Beef Vegetable Skillet over Rice	Meat Ball Soup	
Sat - Baked Breaded Fish/Tartar Sauce		

*entrée only offered for Home Delivered Meals

Tue - Tai Chi	8:30 a.m.	Community Room
Wed - History of the Tie Flume	10:30 a.m.	Community Room
Fri - Bridge	12:30 p.m.	Community Room

Lunch Service Hours: 11:30 a.m. to 12:45 p.m., 7 days a week

211 Smith Street Sheridan, WY 82801 (307) 672-6079
Senior Center Main Phone: (307) 672-2240

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PERSONALIZED SHORT-TERM THERAPY



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