

# PACE Center is dedicated

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Verna Barr



Volunteers of America's (VOA) newest addition of the PACE program in Eckert, widens services that compliment, support and bridge those services already offered in both Delta County and Montrose County. The implication of this program of all-inclusive care for the elderly provides a living option for seniors to support their independence and allow them to remain at home.

Senior Community Care Executive Director Gary Snider welcomed visitors and introduced the speakers.

Pastor Bill Forbes of the Presbyterian Church of Delta gave the invocation and dedicated the building and program to the community. He spoke of the need for respect and dignity of individuals with special needs.

Others told of the history of VOA, the founders and their vision, and how this program came into being. Among these speakers were: President/CEO of VOA Chuck Gould, and Vice President of Strategic Initiatives, National PACE Association Peter Fitzgerald.

This program is not new. PACE has been in urban areas and has proven to be successful. Grant money and cooperation with local health providers has made it possible to adapt and extend the program to 15 rural communities throughout the nation. At present, Delta County and Montrose County, through existing VOA healthcare facilities, are the first of these programs on the Western Slope.

The core of the program is the PACE Center with physicians, nursing, therapy, pharmacy, dietary, case managers, social workers, and a strong transportation component. All inclusive, the program offers these and other health care services including arranging to make a safe living environment for the frail elderly or handicapped. Those enrolling in the program are primarily eligible Medicaid/Medicare recipients.

The entire team of care-givers meets at the center on a daily basis to review progress and plan together for the participant. They coordinate to maintain that individual's ability to function in their familiar environment.

Wayne Olson, VOA Senior Vice President of Healthcare Operations gave special recognition to those who were involved in bringing PACE to our area. Plaques were presented to Ron Patterson (resources), Danae Hayer (staff development), Jonie Reilly-Hall (marketing director), Chuck Gould (VOA president), John Fitzmaurice (STIN PACE Association), David Reyes of Altitude Edge Consultants, Patrick Davis (architect), Rhonda Hackbart, Scott Stricker, accepted by Kyle Rigidon, of Ridgeway Valley Construction, and Gary Snider (PACE executive director).

The facility is open weekdays and is located at 11485 Highway 65 (completely remodeled, in formally one of the apartment buildings) at Horizons Health Care Center, and can be reached by calling 835-8500.