

Spotlight on Community Living

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Serving D.C. residents who are age 18+ with a disability or age 60+ and their caregivers

Vol 2, No 5



Executive Director's Message

John M. Thompson, Ph.D., FAAMA, D.C. Office on Aging

As this issue of the **Spotlight on Aging**, I would like to discuss hoarding. According to the Mayo Clinic, "hoarding is the excessive collection of items, along with the inability to discard them." Hoarding is referred to as compulsive hoarding syndrome and may be a symptom of obsessive-compulsive disorder. Individuals who hoard do not perceive that they have a problem with collecting unnecessary items; therefore, loved ones intervening experience challenges of trying to clean their homes. Let me clarify, a hoarder differs from a collector. A collector is a person who accumulates items, such as model trains and stamps, and deliberately searches for specific collector items of value and proudly displays them.

A hoarder's home is cluttered with random items such as newspapers, magazines, junk mail, greeting cards and other items stacked on the countertops,

sinks, stoves, desks, floors, tables, chairs, and other furniture. A hoarder's rationale for keeping all of these items is because it is of value and may be useful in the future. A hoarder also has difficulty with organizing items and may move items from one stack to another, but refuses to discard any items. Such individuals have excessive attachment to possessions and are uncomfortable when others touch or borrow their belongings.

In a study conducted by researchers Steketee, Frost, and Kim (2001), clutter significantly prevented many seniors from functioning effectively at home. For example, hoarders were unable to sleep in their beds because their beds were covered with random items; therefore, they slept in a chair or couch. In some cases, some seniors had so much clutter in their homes that they were climbing over these items just to get to another room. This is very

dangerous as seniors could fall and break a hip or arm while climbing over these items. Beyond clutter posing a fall hazard, it is also a fire hazard. Many collected items such as newspapers, magazines, and junk mail could quickly fuel a fire and can make it very difficult for the seniors to safely exit the home and for firefighters to enter the home to extinguish the fire. Lastly, those who hoard are reluctant to allow people into their homes, which could lead to

increased social isolation.

If you know of someone who is a hoarder, I encourage you to talk with a doctor as soon as possible. This is an opportunity for a medical professional to intervene and assist the senior with coping with compulsive hoarding syndrome. I also encourage you to contact the D.C. Office on Aging to learn about available resources for assisting seniors with organizing their homes into a safe and productive environment. ~



Mayor Gray Celebrates the Lunar New Year and highlights support for District of Columbia Asian and Pacific Islander senior residents during the event.

PRIMARY ELECTION APRIL 1, 2014

Requesting an Absentee Ballot

You do not need a reason to vote by mail, but the DC Board of Elections and Ethics (DCBOEE) must receive your written request not later than 4:45 p.m. on Tuesday, March 25. To request an absentee ballot, complete the form online at www.dcboee.org and then print, sign and mail it to the DCBOEE or send a letter to DCBOEE at 441 – 4th Street, NW, Suite 250 North, Washington, DC 20001. A letter must include

the following information:

- Your name, and date of birth;
- Your residence address and any change of address;
- The address where your ballot is to be mailed (if different from your residence address);
- Your date of birth; and
- Your signature.

You can request a mail absentee ballot for one election, for all elections held in an entire calendar year, or for all future elections (as a permanent absentee voter). Your voted ballot must

be postmarked by Election Day, April 1 and received at the Board's office by April 11. If you prefer, you may return your absentee ballot by hand to the DCBOEE office or to any polling place by 8:00 p.m. on Election Day. For more information, please contact the Board of Elections at 202-727-2525.

Choice 2: Voting at an Early Voting Center

Early voting centers have increased to thirteen sites throughout the District. You can cast your ballot at any center using the Board's touch-screen voting equip-

ment. The touch screen offers a voter-verifiable paper audit trail of all votes cast. Early voting begins on March 17, visit www.dcboee.org for locations, dates and times.

DCOA JOB ANNOUNCEMENTS

The D.C. Department of Human Resources has posted Program Coordinator and Public Health Analyst positions for the D.C. Office on Aging. All applications must be submitted online at www.dchr.dc.gov for consideration. Please visit www.dchr.dc.gov to locate

AGE-FRIENDLY DC BLOCK-BY-BLOCK WALK

What do you see when you walk around your neighborhood? What about other parts of the city where you may shop, visit friends, or go to medical appointments?

The Age-Friendly DC Block-by-Block Walk—March 20 – April 15—will document what you and others see so decisions can be made based on real-time information about improvements to make. The Walk will also document what is good (great!) about neighborhoods across the District of Columbia. Examples of what Age-Friendly DC Walk organizers are looking for:

- Unsafe sidewalks
- Accessibility of retail outlets and social services
- Personal and pedestrian safety

Want to do more than volunteer? Join the effort as a Team Leader. Team Leaders get special training—though anyone is welcome to participate in the training sessions. Dates, times and locations are here:

Tuesday, March 11 from 7:00 – 9:00 pm (training is at 8:00 pm) at the Brightwood Community Association meeting (St. Johns United Baptist Church, 6343 13th Street NW)

Register to volunteer and/or to participate in the training by visiting www.agefriendly.dc.gov.

partner agencies and community based organizations that provide computer and internet access.

All inquiries related to employment and job applications should be directed to HR Answers at (202) 442-9700.



COMMUNITY EVENTS CALENDAR

MARCH

4th and 18th • 12 pm

Caregivers can get valuable information and resources to assist them with their caregiving responsibilities during the D.C. Caregivers Online Chat at Noon. Log on at noon or check back at your convenience, and hit replay to see what you missed. Visit www.dcoa.dc.gov and click on Online Chat to join the discussion. You may also contact Linda Irizarry at 202-535-1442 or linda.irizarry@dc.gov.

6th, 13th, 20th and 26th • 10:30 am

Learn all about diabetes in a class at the Ft. Lincoln III Senior Nutrition Site, 3298 Ft. Lincoln Dr. NE, each Thursday in March. To register, call Vivian Grayton at 202-529-8701.

8th • 1 to 3 pm

The District of Columbia Commission on Persons with Disabilities invites the community to attend a community forum on personal care attendants. It will be held at the old Council chambers, 441 4th St. NW. For more information, call Alice A. Thompson at 202 535-1321.

10th to April 28 • 10:45 am or 12 pm

Choose either session of the weekly

“Strength, Balance and Posture” class at Iona Senior Services. Build muscle and improve movement using weights and bands. The instructor works with beginners and advanced students to help them progress at their own rate. Iona is located at 4125 Albemarle St. NW. For more information, call 202-895-9448.

17th • 11 am to 1 pm

The Washington Seniors Wellness Center hosts a town hall meeting with Dr. John Thompson, the executive director of the D.C. Office on Aging. The Center is located at 3001 Alabama Ave. SE. For more information, call 202-581-9355.

18th • 11 am

The Kibar Nutrition Site, 1519 Islamic Way (4th St.) NW, hosts a seminar titled “Older Adults & Healthy Relations.” To register, call Vivian Grayton at 202-529-8701.

19th • 11:30 am

Learn all about the Metro SmartTrip card, including a bus demonstration at the Washington Seniors Wellness Center. The Center is located at 3001 Alabama Ave. SE. For more information, call 202-581-9355.

19th • 12 pm

AARP SWWW (Southwest Waterfront) Chapter meets to discuss 2014 goals,

resources and services of the Office on Aging, Aging and Disability Resource Center with speaker Dr. Chantelle Teasdell, associate director of the center and other staff members. The program is presented in conjunction with the 2014 National Women’s History Month Theme: Celebrating Women of Character, Courage and Commitment. Current AARP members and new prospective members are welcome. The meeting will be held in River Park Mutual Home’s community room, 1311 Delaware Ave, SW. For further information, contact chapter president Betty Jean Tolbert Jones, bettyjeantolbertjones@yahoo.com or 202-554-0901. Cost: \$5 for lunch.

20th

The East River Family Strengthening KEEN Seniors Program will celebrate National Nutrition Month with a “Parade of Aprons Luncheon.” Contact Robin Gantt at 202-534-4880 Ext 110, for time and location.

25th • 10 am

Seabury Resources for Aging will host a seminar on diabetes, obesity and heart disease with information provided by Washington Hospital Center Medstar. It will take place at 2900 Newton St., NE. Call Vivian Grayton at 202-529-8701 for more information.

THE PERSONAL CARE ATTENDANTS COMMUNITY FORUM

SATURDAY, MARCH 8, 2014, 1:00 PM – 3:00 PM

441 4th St, NW
Old Council Chambers
Washington, DC 20001
(Red line - Judiciary Square Metro Station)

For more information or to request reasonable accommodations please contact Christina Mitchell at 202-481-3877 or christina.mitchell@dc.gov

MARCH IS NATIONAL NUTRITION MONTH

While taste drives most food choices, eating nutrient-rich foods that provide the most nutrition per calorie is one of the best ways to “Enjoy the Taste of Eating Right,” according to the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. As part of the 2014 National Nutrition Month® theme, the Academy encourages everyone to choose the most nutritionally-packed foods you can from each of the five

MyPlate food groups every day. The Office on Aging funds nearly 50 group meal sites and provides home bound meal delivery for the frail elderly in the District of Columbia. To find out how you can enjoy a nutritious mid-day meal and or a culturally sensitive meal near you, contact the D.C. Office on Aging Information and Assistance Unit at 202-724-5626. ~

SPOTLIGHT ON COMMUNITY LIVING

Spotlight on Community Living is published by the External Affairs and Communications unit of the D.C. Office on Aging.

Advertising contained in the Current is not endorsed by the D.C. Office on Aging or by the publisher. The D.C. Office on Aging is responsible for developing and carrying out a comprehensive and coordinated system of health, nutrition, education, employment, training, and social services for the District’s elderly population, who are 60 years of age and older. The Office on Aging also administers the Aging and Disability Resource Center, a one-stop shop resource center, designed to assist seniors, persons with disabilities 18 years of age and older and family caregivers navigate the long-term services and supports system.

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In accordance with the D.C. Human Rights Act of 1977, as amended, D.C. Official Code Section §§2-1401.01 et seq., (Act), the D.C. Office on Aging does not discriminate on the basis of actual or perceived: race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, personal appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, familial status, family responsibilities, matriculation, political affiliation, genetic information, disability, source of income, or place of residence or business.
Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination which is prohibited by the Act.
In addition, harassment based on any of the above protected categories is prohibited by the Act.
Discrimination in violation of the Act will not be tolerated. Violators will be subject to disciplinary action.

DCOA RANKS HIGH IN GRADE DC

The Grade DC ratings are in for January. DCOA scored a letter grade of “A” overall for the rating period of the advanced customer-service platform Grade DC, designed to provide the best possible feedback on, and analysis of, service delivery and customer care by District government agencies. Grade DC allows residents to

provide feedback on their encounters with participating agencies by text messages from cell phones, tweets on twitter, Facebook posts or through the Grade. DC.gov website directly.

To provide feedback on customer service or services rendered by DCOA or any other Grade DC agency, visit www.grade.dc.gov. ~

SALUTE TO 100

The District is searching for residents who are age 100 or older to honor during an event planned for this spring. If you know of residents who have celebrated their centennial birthday by March 30, please call Darlene Nowlin at (202) 724-5622 or you may email: darlene.nowlin@dc.gov. When registering centenarians, please make sure you know the name, birth date and contact information for each individual.