



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA OFFICE ON AGING

# Spotlight On Aging



VOLUME XXVI, ISSUE 10

A newsletter for D.C. Seniors

October 2011



## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

By Dr. John M. Thompson

October 1st brings a new fiscal year in the District government, and as we welcome the new fiscal year, we also welcome new community-based organizations to the Office on Aging Senior Service Network. Our new agencies are Mary's Center and Terrific, Inc. Mary's Center will operate The Bernice Fonteneau Senior Wellness Center. Terrific, Inc. will provide services for seniors in Ward 1. In addition, long-time senior service network member, Family Matters of Greater Washington, will now lead services for the elderly in Wards 2, 6 and 8.

We look forward to a great relationship with our new providers, and know that services to seniors will continue without disruption. We thank our former providers AHI Senior Services Ward 8 and Emmaus Services for the Elderly for leading services in Wards 2 and 8 through our network of providers.

While we're on the topic of service providers, I would like to inform you that the Office on Aging is working closely with the Office of Contracting and Procurement to release the Request for Proposal for the senior food contract within the next month. The District government looks forward to receiving proposals from vendors who care about our seniors and are able to deliver innovative practices without compromising quality.

### Needs Assessment

We are in the process of completing the citywide needs assessment with our contractor, which will identify our plan of action for aging services for the future. The results of this project will help us identify the areas of focus when planning programs and services for senior citizens in the District, persons with disabilities 18 and older, their families and caregivers.

It is our hope that the study will also provide us the information that we need to maximize the dollars that have been allocated to carry out the mission of this office. We hope that many of you were able to participate in the focus groups, group assessments, the online surveys and phone surveys that have been conducted over the last couple of months.

### Advocacy: Your Voice Matters!

In accepting the Executive Director position,

I promised Mayor Gray that I would bring best practices from other states to the District of Columbia. One approach that our office will pursue is the implementation of the Silver Haired Legislature (SHL) for our District's seniors. The purpose of the SHL is to create a formal mechanism for seniors to identify problems impacting them and to formulate policies to address those problems.

Additionally, the SHL will present proposed legislation to elected officials. There are several dozen states including California, Florida, South Carolina and Texas that have been successful at educating seniors about the policy formulation process and advocacy. In those states, seniors are elected by their fellow peers to serve as their representatives.

In another approach, we will actively engage our constituents by proposing regulations and allowing a formal comment period that will allow constituents to provide input to assist us in finalizing regulations. This process will serve as a conduit to formalize policies and procedures for the agency.

Lastly, I've been in contact with stakeholders who are interested in initiating a think tank. This would be an excellent opportunity for forward thinkers who are passionate about advancing the interests of seniors and to strategize about how to move the long-term services and supports system in a positive direction.

Please stay tuned for more information on all three programs! We look forward to your participation.

### Keeping Our Seniors and Their Families Safe

Oct. 9 to 15 is National Fire Prevention Awareness Week. We hope that our seniors have been equipped with the information and resources available to keep them safe during fire emergencies.

A great tip: test and check the batteries on your smoke alarms when you adjust your clock twice a year for Daylight Saving Time. This year, Nov. 6 marks the date that the time reverts for us, so please take this opportunity as a reminder to change the batteries on your smoke alarms, and test them to ensure they

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Executive Director John M. Thompson presented 100-year-old Kelso Stewart with a certificate during his birthday celebration. The Congress Heights Senior Wellness Center participant moved to the District about seven years ago to live with his daughter and is a regular participant of the wellness center, as well as the weekend program at the Washington Seniors Wellness Center.



Culturally sensitive meals received the OK at the Asian and Pacific Islander Senior Center nutrition program.

## Lead Service Agencies

The Office on Aging provides funding to the following agencies to lead services for seniors in their respective wards. Known as lead agencies, seniors may contact them to begin critical services including, but not limited to, case management, meals and transportation. Services are provided for District residents age 60 and older, their families and caregivers.

### Terrific, Inc., Ward 1

202-234-4128

### Family Matters of Greater Washington, Ward 2

202-289-1510

### IONA Senior Services, Ward 3

202-966-1055

### Barney Neighborhood House Senior Program, Ward 4

202-939-9020

### Seabury Ward 5 Aging Services, Ward 5

202-529-8701

### Family Matters of Greater Washington, Ward 6

202-547-7502

### East River Family Strengthening Collaborative, Ward 7

### KEEN Senior Program

202-534-4880

### Family Matters of Greater Washington, Ward 8

202-562-6860



GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

VINCENT C. GRAY, MAYOR

## D.C. OFFICE ON AGING NEWSLETTER

# Community Calendar

## October events

### 4th • 9:30 to 11:30 a.m.

On the first Tuesday of each month, graduates of the Senior Citizens Police Academy hold meetings, meet with representatives of the community and others to stay informed and serve their communities. Upcoming meetings are on Oct. 4 and Nov. 1. Meetings are held at the Office on Aging, 500 K St., N.E. For more information, call Courtney Williams at 202-727-8370.

### 7th • 11:30 a.m.

Join in pink ribbon celebrations as Ward 5 senior nutrition centers hold Breast Cancer Awareness Day events. For locations, call Vivian Grayton at 202-529-8701.

### 12th • 1 p.m.

Watch the movie *Miracle at St. Anne*, directed by Spike Lee, with other seniors at Model Cities Senior Wellness, 1901 Evarts St., N.E. For more information, call 202-635-1900.

### 13th • 11:30 a.m.

Learn more about diabetic and therapeutic shoes at Edgewood Terrace Senior Nutrition Center, 635 Edgewood St., N.E. For more information, call 202-529-8701.

### 14th • 5 to 8 p.m.

Meet Iona Senior Services artists Mickey Klein and Sue Garten at a free reception at Iona, 4125 Albemarle St., N.W. For more information, call 202-895-9448.

### 20th • 8 p.m.

Attend a concert by the award-winning senior chorus Young at Heart at the Warner Theater, 513 13th St., N.W. The concert is a benefit for Iona Senior Services. For more information, call 202-895-9616.

### 28th • 5 to 8 p.m.

Attend a Halloween happy hour and costume contest with Model Cities Senior Wellness, 1901 Evarts St., N.E. For more information, call 202-635-1900.

## November events

### 10th • 11:30 a.m.

Seaberry Resources for Aging salutes veterans at Ward 5 senior nutrition centers. For more information, call 202-529-8701.

### 16th • 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Travel to Harrington Casino in Delaware with the KEEN Seniors Program. The trip costs \$30, but you will receive \$15 in rebates. Light refreshments will be served in route. Call Robin Gantt at 202-534-4880, ext 110 for more information.

# Celebrate Fire Prevention Week

Fire Prevention Week will be celebrated this year Oct. 9 to 15, under the theme "Protect Your Family from Fire." Urban fires consist of uncontrolled burning in developed areas. Such events can produce severe injuries, cause deaths, and inflict serious financial loss to the community.

**In general, you should take the following precautions:**

- Call **911** immediately if you smell smoke or fire.
- **DO NOT** leave lit candles unattended.
- Monitor the stove when cooking.
- Keep matches and lighters away from children.
- Install a smoke alarm outside each sleeping area and on each level of your home.
- Check the smoke alarm once a month.
- Replace all smoke alarm batteries at least once a year.
- Replace your smoke alarms every ten years.
- Have a fire extinguisher in your home and know where the extinguisher is located at your workplace. Make sure the fire extinguisher is up to date, and make sure you know how to properly operate the extinguisher.
- Have several escape routes planned



from your home and your workplace.

- If you see smoke or fire in your first escape route, use your second way out. If you must exit through smoke, crawl low under the smoke to your exit.
  - If smoke, heat or flames block your exit routes, stay in the room with the door closed. Signal for help using a bright-colored cloth at the window. If there is a telephone in the room, call the fire department and tell them where you are.
  - If your clothes catch fire, **STOP, DROP and ROLL.**
  - If the door is cool leave quickly, close door behind you and crawl to an exit.
- Once you are out, stay out.
- **DO NOT** enter a fire-damaged building until authorities say it's okay.
  - Check for signs of smoke or heat in case the fire isn't totally out.
  - Have an electrician check your household wiring before you turn the power back on and **DO NOT** try to reconnect any utilities yourself.
- For power outages, call Pepco's 24-Hour Outage Report Line at 1-877-737-2662. For downed wires, call Pepco immediately at 202-872-3432.
- You may also call the Fire Prevention Bureau at 202-727-1614 for more information.

## Director's message

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are in proper working condition. For more information or to get assistance with fire prevention, call the Fire Prevention Division at 202-727-1614.

### We are Moving!

Hopefully, by the time that you receive this issue of "Spotlight on Aging" we will have moved to our new location. As many of you are aware, the Office on Aging will move its headquarters to 500 K St., N.E. on Oct. 3. This is the site of the former Rutherford B. Hayes School, which has been vacant for many years. In addition to our office, the site will house the Ward 6 Senior Wellness Cen-

ter, which is still under construction.

If you plan to visit us for services, including assistance with employment or information and assistance on senior programs and/or resources for persons with disabilities ages 18 and older, please take a moment and call us at 202-724-5626. We plan to operate without interruption. Therefore, we will be happy to assist you with all of our regular services.

We look forward to seeing you at our ribbon-cutting ceremony for the new Office on Aging! Please stay tuned for the date of this ceremony.

Thank for your patience. As always, if you need additional information on our programs or services, please feel free to call us at 202-724-5622.

## SPOTLIGHT ON AGING

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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 subjected to disciplinary action.

**The Office on Aging is in partnership with the District of Columbia Recycling Program.**

## Actions to Take This Flu Season

For older adults, the seasonal flu can be very serious, even deadly. Ninety percent of flu-related deaths and more than half of flu-related hospitalizations occur in people age 65 and older.

### 1. Get Your Flu Shot

The flu vaccine is safe and effective, and because the influenza viruses in the flu shot are inactive, you can't get influenza from the vaccine.

If you have Medicare Part B health insurance, there is no cost to you for the flu shot if the doctor accepts assignment for giving the shot.

### 2. Take Everyday Preventive Actions

Stay healthy by practicing these healthy habits

- Avoid people who are sick with the flu
- Stay home when you are sick
- Cover your coughs and sneezes.
- Wash your hands often
- Don't touch your eyes, nose or mouth
- Get plenty of sleep, stay physically active, manage your stress, drink plenty



of fluids, and eat nutritious food

### 3. Seek Medical Advice Quickly if You Develop Flu Symptoms

Flu symptoms include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. Some people may also have vomiting and diarrhea. People may be infected with the flu and have respiratory symptoms without a fever.

It's very important that antiviral drugs be used early to treat flu in people who are very sick with flu (for example, are in the hospital) or who have a greater chance of getting serious flu complications, like people 65 and older.