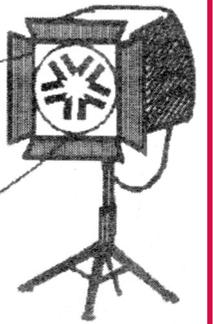




DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA OFFICE ON AGING

# Spotlight On Aging



VOLUME XXVIII, ISSUE 11

A newsletter for D.C. Seniors

November 2012



## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

By Dr. John M. Thompson, Ph.D., FAAMA

My column this month is about food insecurity. The United States Department of Agriculture defines food insecurity as the state of being “unable to afford balanced meals, cutting the size of meals because of insufficient money for food, or being hungry because of insufficient money for food.”

As you are aware, seniors are on a fixed income and are constantly deciding between prescription medication purchases, transportation to doctors' offices and other places, and food. Unfortunately, seniors often are left in a tough situation of having to do without sufficient nutritious food.

I recently gained a new perspective about food insecurity when I joined D.C. Hunger Solutions in its Food Stamp Challenge. On this challenge, I was restricted to eating only \$30 worth of groceries that would sustain me for seven days. As I reflect on my experience, I realized that I purchased an abundance of carbohydrate-loaded items, rice and noodles; insufficient vegetables and fruits; very little meats; and no snacks. Consequently, I was extremely sluggish in the afternoon because of no additional foods to eat until dinner time. Moreover, I was eating the same food for lunch and dinner.

Although this was only a seven-day challenge, where I lacked variety in food choices, many District seniors and other residents frequently experience a lack of sufficient food to maintain a healthy lifestyle. According to the D.C. Hunger Solutions' website, hunger and a lack of access to healthy foods are contributing factors to obesity and poor health outcomes. Such re-

sults lead to more visits to emergency departments, admissions to hospitals, and for some, admissions to nursing homes.

Trips to a medical facility can be a traumatic experience for our seniors, and we must make every effort in assisting those experiencing food insecurity to overcome this barrier.

To combat this plight, we are partnering with D.C. Hunger Solutions to increase the public's awareness about the unfortunate impact that food insecurity has on the District's seniors and other people. Moreover, we have partnered with the Capital Area Food Bank to administer the Commodity Supplemental Food Program and the Seniors Farmers' Market Program, which provide seniors with a monthly bag of groceries and an annual issuance of coupons to purchase fresh produce at local farmers' markets.

Through these two programs — our congregate meal/homebound meal programs and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (formerly known as Food Stamps) — we have an opportunity to tackle food insecurity. This is our best approach in assisting every impacted senior.

We challenge our partners in the community, local churches, civic associations, and other community-based organizations, to host food drives and grocery coupon clubs that could give seniors a helping hand in their communities.

If you or someone you know is experiencing food insecurity or if you would like to help us tackle food insecurity, please contact us at 202-724-5622. Through a collective effort, we can ensure that all District residents have access to adequate nutritional meals.

## Mayor Gray Releases Report and Strategic Plan to Ensure the District Becomes an 'Age-Friendly' City

*Office on Aging Plan Outlines Four Goals to Ensure Livability for Aging Residents*

Mayor Vincent C. Gray, other District officials and representatives of the D.C. Office on Aging (DCOA) released the D.C. Senior Needs Assessment and a Strategic Plan for Community Living in an Age-Friendly City. The multi-year plan highlights four main goals and strategies for serving seniors that DCOA and other District agencies will implement through 2017.

“Ensuring that the District's residents have the supports necessary to age in our community while living independently is a critical goal in my One City Action Plan, and making sure the District is an Age-Friendly City will benefit all of our residents,” Mayor Gray said. “The needs assessment gives us a roadmap for beginning to meet the current needs of our older residents, identifying service gaps and allowing DCOA to refine its service model.”

The District will convene a task force of District agencies and community partners, including AARP, to oversee the execution of the three-year strategic plan. The following four goals from the plan will be addressed:

- The District will be an Age-Friendly City — an urban community that is inclusive and accessible, and encourages active and healthy aging.
- Every senior will be linked to appropriate quality resources ensuring independent, productive living in the community.
- All seniors will have access to nutritious meals and physical and social activities, and will be financially prepared for re-

tirement and their long-term-care needs.

- The District will create and strengthen partnerships to implement innovative practices and improve senior services.

The District will join seven states as a pilot for the AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities through the World Health Organization (WHO) Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities.

The goal of this program is to provide a system to educate, encourage, promote and recognize improvements that make cities, towns and counties more user-friendly not only for their older residents, but for residents of all ages. This represents Goal No. 1 of the District's strategic plan.

The strategic plan came in response to the Senior Needs Assessment, which Mayor Gray commissioned DCOA to conduct. It was the first such assessment the District has conducted since 1978.

The study was designed to analyze the current needs of D.C.'s older adults, how services are delivered and what needs may be unmet for senior citizens. Data provided through the report will allow DCOA and its Senior Service Network to address the future needs of the District's growing population of baby boomers as well as current consumers.

For more information or to get a copy of the Senior Needs Assessment or Strategic Plan for Community Living in an Age-Friendly City, visit DCOA's website or call the agency's main number at 202-724-5622.

## Give us a grade on service!

The Office on Aging is pleased to join nine other agencies participating in GradeDC. Let us know about the service you receive as you visit or call the Office on Aging or visit one of the six Office on Aging-funded wellness centers across the city.

Log onto [www.grade.dc.gov](http://www.grade.dc.gov) to rate us. We would love to hear how we can serve you better! If you are on Facebook or Twitter, send us a post or a tweet to let us know what you think. We are among the second group of agencies to be rated.

Current agencies involved in the rating process are:

- DC Public Library
- Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs

- District Department of Transportation
- Department of Motor Vehicles
- Department of Parks and Recreation
- Department of Public Works
- Fire and Emergency Medical Services
- Metropolitan Police Department
- 311/911

Visit [www.grade.dc.gov](http://www.grade.dc.gov) and provide your feedback today!



GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

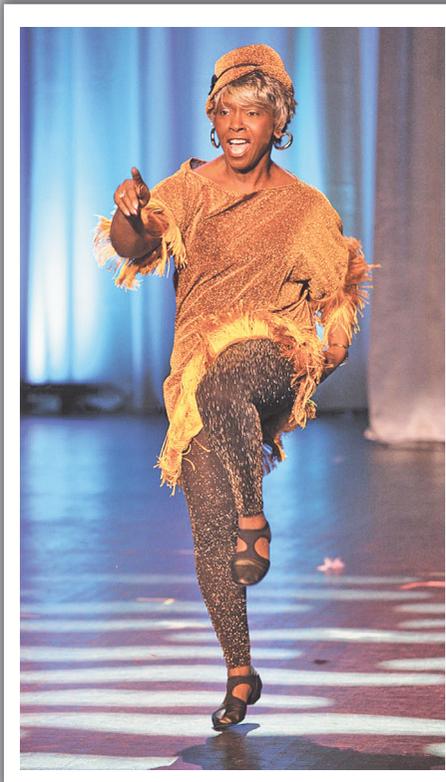
VINCENT C. GRAY, MAYOR

# Ms. Senior D.C. Makes Finals in National Event

After the announcement of the Top 10 candidates for the Ms. Senior America Pageant, Ms. Senior D.C. Mary L. McCoy was joined by representatives from California, Colorado, Missouri, New Jersey, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas and Utah during the annual event held in Atlantic City, N.J. at Harrah's Hotel.

"I was shocked but so honored and proud to represent the District of Columbia," said McCoy after making the finals. McCoy, a resident of Ward 8, is only the second contestant from the District of Columbia to make the finals. The first contestant was Sandra Bears, Ms. Senior D.C. 2005.

The finalists then performed their talents one final time before the winner was announced. McCoy performed her dance with enthusiasm to "Let Your Mind Go Back," by Sheba Potts Wright. Complete strangers from the audience came up to members of the group to say how much they enjoyed her dance and that they were amazed by her high kick, even suggesting that she angle herself so that the audience could see the full extent of her kick.



**Ms. Senior D.C. Mary L. McCoy performs during the talent competition at the Ms. Senior America Pageant.**

McCoy, age 61, modified her dance slightly from her performance at the local pageant in June and changed her costume, which she made. She wore black shimmering leggings with a gold, shimmering asymmetrical tunic top with fringe, topped off with a gold shimmering stinky brim hat with a black band.

Elisabeth Howard captured the title of Ms. Senior America. The opera singer and actress from California sang "Violetta's Aria" from Verdi's *La Traviata*, *Sempre Libera*, in Italian. The rest of her court included Ms. South Carolina Laura McFayden (1st Runner Up), Ms. Texas Lillie Madison (2nd Runner Up), Ms. Utah Boni Losee (3rd Runner Up), Ms. New Jersey Carol Dugan (4th Runner Up).

This year 35 contestants competed for the title of Ms. Senior America dur-



**Ms. Senior D.C. and the contestants wore red gowns during the opening number of the pageant. Representatives from 34 other states competed in the Ms. Senior America Pageant 2012. Locally, Ms. Senior Virginia Kat Fanelli and Ms. Maryland Mahal May also were contestants.**

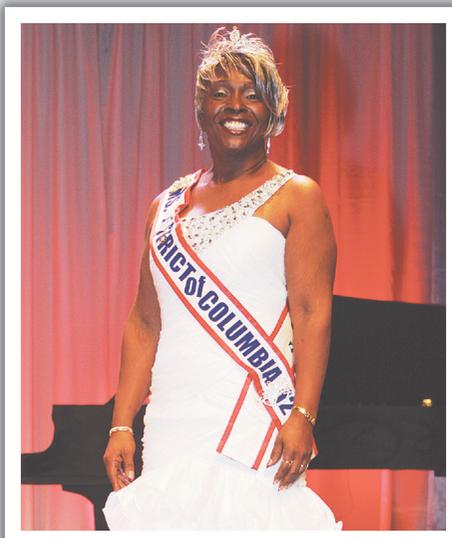


**Ms. Senior America Elisabeth Howard (center) poses with Gwen Moseley Coleman, District of Columbia State Director, and Ms. Senior D.C. Mary L. McCoy after the crowning.**

ing the national pageant. Each contestant, who must be 60 years or older, was judged on a private interview with the judges, her philosophy of life, and her talent and evening gown presentations.

Senior America Inc, produces the

pageant, and its philosophy is based upon the belief that seniors are the foundation of America and our most valuable treasure. It is upon their knowledge, experience and resources that the younger generation has the opportunity to build a better society.



**Ms. Senior D.C. Mary L. McCoy pictured in her stunning gown during the Evening Gown Presentation.**

## Become a DCOA Ambassador

A participant was bubbling with excitement after attending a recent training of the DCOA Ambassadors. She thought of many ways that she could engage her neighbors and assist the Office on Aging in getting the word out about the programs and services provided by the office.

To find out more information and ways you can help senior citizens, the disabled age 18 and older, and their caregivers, call 202-724-5622 to register.

Upcoming dates:

- Nov. 14, 9 a.m. to noon
- Dec. 12, 9 a.m. to noon

## Office on Aging Oversees Food Programs

The D.C. Office on Aging has begun the operations of the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP) and the Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP) after they were transferred from the Department of Health last month.

The CSFP provides nutritious food to low-income pregnant, postpartum and lactating women, preschool-age children and residents 60 years of age or older. In addition to providing nutritious food, the CSFP also provides nutrition education to help participants

improve their health through better nutrition.

The purpose of the SFMNP is to provide fresh fruits and vegetables to senior citizens of the District of Columbia who are eligible for CSFP. The program expands the awareness and use of farmers' markets, and also supports and promotes the daily consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables. There are several distribution sites across the city.

For more information, call 202-535-1417.

# Community Calendar

## November events

### 5th • 10 a.m. to noon

Take part in Seniors Going Green! Presentations will be provided by Dept. of Public Works Recycling, DC Sustainable, Legal Counsel for the Elderly, Office of the Peoples Counsel and the D.C. Office on Aging and Aging and Disability Resource Center at Behrend Adas Senior Fellowship, 2850 Quebec St. NW.

### 6th • 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Seniors Going Green will be repeated at St. Albans Episcopal Church, 3001 Wisconsin Ave. NW.

### 8th • 5 to 8:30 p.m.

D.C. Caregivers' Institute National Family Caregivers' Month will sponsor a celebration reception at the Charles Sumner School Museum & Archives, 1201 17th St. NW. The theme is "Good Time Jazz." R.S.V.P is required and seating is limited. Contact the D.C. Caregivers' Institute, 202-464-1513.

### 14th • 10 a.m. to 2 pm

The Office on Aging will exhibit during the Community Health and Wellness Fair at River Park Mutual Homes, 1311 Delaware Ave. SW. Walgreens will also be onsite administering free flu vaccines.

### 14th • 1 p.m.

The Model Cities Senior Wellness Center, located at 1900 Evarts St. NE, will present a Gospel Explosion show featuring local talent and a special guest appearance. For more information, contact Monica Carroll at 202-635-1900, x24.

### 19th+ • 6 to 7:30 p.m.

Iona Senior Services and the Alzheimer's Association National Capital Area Chapter are providing two new educational series, one for people caring for someone diagnosed with early-stage Alzheimer's disease and the other for people who have been diagnosed with Alzheimer's. The meetings run concurrently on Mondays, Nov. 19 and 26 and Dec. 3 from 6 to 7:30 p.m. at Iona, 4125 Albemarle St. NW. To register, call 202-895-9448 and select option 4.

### 25th • 3:30 p.m.

The Choraleers of the Washington Seniors Wellness Center will present its annual concert at Saint John Christian Methodist Church, 2801 Stanton Rd. SE. For more information, call 202-581-9355.

### 28th • 12:45 p.m.

The Model Cities Senior Wellness Center will host a storytelling program. The center is located at 1900 Evarts St. NE. For more information, call Monica Carroll at 202-635-1900, x24.

### 28th • 1:30 to 3 p.m.

Iona Senior Services will sponsor a program called "How to be an Effective Caregiver." The workshop covers the basics of legal and financial planning necessary for aging in place and gives an overview of the services available in the community. It will take place at Live and Learn Bethesda, at Bethesda-Chevy Chase Regional Service Center, 4805 Edgemoor Lane, Second Floor, Bethesda, MD. The cost is \$10. Register at [www.liveandlearnbethesda.org](http://www.liveandlearnbethesda.org) or call 301-740-6150.

## December

### 1st • 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The Office on Aging will exhibit at the Family Caregivers Forum at Providence Hospital, St. Catharine's Hall, 10th and Varnum Streets NE.

### 5th • 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The Mayor's Annual Senior Holiday Celebration will be held at the D.C. Armory, 2001 East Capitol St., SE. The annual event will feature health, wellness and safety demonstrations, health exhibits, live entertainment, music and dancing to the greatest hits. Free flu shots will be administered on site. A festive holiday lunch will also be served. To reserve your free ticket, call 202-724-5626

## Hayes Senior Wellness Center Open for Business

Seniors — Come One, Come All" to the Hayes Senior Wellness Center. Enjoy fitness activities, exciting games, hand dancing and walking clubs that are offered at all senior wellness centers in the District of Columbia. Unique to this center is a

medical model to address the preventive health needs of older adults. Come out and join the fun. The center is open Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. For more information, call 202-727-0357.

## SPOTLIGHT ON AGING

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500 K St., N.E.,  
Washington, D.C. 20002  
202-724-5622 • [www.dcoa.dc.gov](http://www.dcoa.dc.gov)  
Dr. John M. Thompson, Ph.D., FAAMA  
**Executive Director**  
Darlene Nowlin,  
**Editor**  
Selma Dillard,  
**Photographer**

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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.**

## Providing Care for a Loved One

When Ward 1 resident Buddy Moore and his wife Carolyn received her diagnosis of Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS), "it was the worst day of my life because it was a death sentence," said Mr. Moore.

The disease started appearing in her feet first. Mrs. Moore tripped four or five times on her way home one day, which was not normal for her. She went to her medical doctor, who began running tests to rule out various diseases that have similar symptoms. The doctor eventually referred the Moores to a doctor at George Washington University Hospital, who delivered the diagnosis of ALS.

Commonly known as Lou Gehrig's disease, ALS is a fatal neuromuscular disease in which muscle control is lost, resulting in complete paralysis. Through all this, the mind remains sharp and alert. About 30,000 people are currently living with ALS in the United States. This year, 5,000 people will be diagnosed with ALS. The life expectancy of an ALS patient is two to five years from the date of diagnosis.

Later, the disease began affecting Mrs. Moore's left leg and her knees. Through the ALS Association, the Moores were able to get a wheel chair loan. The DC/MD/VA chapter of the organization is there to help, and loans out expensive equipment that many persons would never be able to afford on their own or with their insurance coverage.

When Mrs. Moore later became bedridden and could only move her eyes, the optical reader on loan from the association helped the Moores communicate.

While they made home modifications, like building a ramp into the house, the disease began to wear on Mrs. Moore, and it took hours just to prepare to leave the house. She

eventually said to her husband, "Buddy, what good am I to anybody?"

The family formed the Carolyn J. Moore Corporation, and she was named as CEO. Other family members were also appointed officers in the corporation. This helped her tremendously and made her feel important.

The caregiving experience hit another obstacle, however. Buddy, who cared for his wife almost entirely on his own, was able to lift his petite wife, and she was able to give him some assistance. But one time he was not.

She fell on top of him on the floor, and they were both unable to move. He was able to reach for the phone and call a neighbor and a friend, David. Thinking back, Mr. Moore remembered with a smile, "He was there in no time at all." David was able to lift both of the Moores and to help get them situated.

The Moore's experience only lasted about a year, but their struggles with caregiving were a lot easier because of the resources that were available that allowed Mr. Moore to take care of his wife in their own home.

Mr. Moore, who still remains very active, works with the ALS Association on various projects and is working to make more persons aware of the disease. He also is working with the Office on Aging to help caregivers.

He recently was a guest host on the D.C. Caregivers Online Chat at Noon, sharing his caregiving experience and tips that he is sharing with others. In case you missed the online chat, you may log onto [www.dcoa.dc.gov](http://www.dcoa.dc.gov) to replay it.

For more information, call Linda Irizzary at 202-535-1442. The bi-weekly online chat provides caregivers with helpful tips, information and resources available to assist persons providing care informally.