

# Spotlight on Community Living

Wednesday, October 31, 2012    Serving D.C. residents who are age 18+ with a disability or age 60+ and their caregivers    Vol 1, No 1



## Executive Director's Message

*John M. Thompson, PhD., FAAMA  
D.C. Office on Aging*

Welcome to the first issue of the **Spotlight on Community Living**. In this edition, we will focus the discussion on social isolation. According to researcher, Dr. Cheryl Svensson, social isolation occurs when someone becomes separated or detached from family, friends, and acquaintances. I am not referring to people who want personal time or space to catch up on their thoughts. Socially isolated people are those who are detached from the human element because of illness; cultural barriers; relocation; or because of diminished physical capacities. Studies have shown that social isolation can lead to increased risk of serious illness and death.

This is a significant topic because we all know of a senior who is socially isolated or who is not that involved in a meaningful way with other people. This reminds me of my mother who lives in Columbia, South Carolina. Although my father and brother live in the home with her, I consider her socially isolated for about 95% or more of her days. The reason for this is that she spends a great deal of time in the home alone. My brother is always working and my father is always

volunteering. When they both return home in the evenings, my mother is on her way to bed by 8 or 9 PM. My mother's daily routine consists of going to the gym every morning and returning home to view her Thai Internet programming via her laptop computer. On the other hand, as I consider my father's daily routine, he serves as a mentor to two youths at different middle schools, a library aide at an elementary school, a peer supporter for heart patients at two hospitals, and a library book courier at a nursing home. There is a stark contrast between my mother and my father's lifestyles. My mother is content with being at home, so she says, but is that really bringing joy to her world? My father, on the other hand, finds purpose in his schedule as he says, "I am going to do the Lord's work." He finds joy and satisfaction in helping others while noticing the value that he adds to the community.

In sharing this story, I would like to challenge our readers this month to think about those who may appear to be socially isolated for the majority of their days. If they are socially isolated then they may not be as active as someone who

has a productive routine. This person that I am talking about may be you. Look for the following warning signs of a socially isolated person: one who eliminates social activities once enjoyed due to illness or after experiencing some kind of loss to remain at home; one who frequently complains that things will never be the way they once were; one who is always tired regardless of the number of hours slept each day; one who allows physical appearance to prevent him/her from accepting invitations to social outings. If you or someone that you know can identify with one or more of these symptoms, please contact the DC Office on Aging at **202-724-5622**. We welcome the opportunity to serve you through our many programs such as the wellness and nutrition programs, which could add a vibrant social component to your life. If you would like to give back to your community in a meaningful way, we encourage you to serve as a DC Office on Aging Ambassador. This would give you a chance to apply your passion and skills in helping seniors, persons with disabilities, and family caregivers. Above all, we want to do all we can to support healthy lifestyles and enhance the quality of lives for our seniors. ~

## THE MEDICARE OPEN ENROLLMENT PERIOD ENDS DECEMBER 7!

Throughout the year, Medicare has different enrollment periods. The Open Enrollment Period, or OEP, is the timeframe during which Medicare beneficiaries (persons receiving Medicare) can make changes to their Medicare plans. This year's OEP began October 15 and will end **December 7, 2012**. Any changes you make to your Medicare plan during this period go into effect on January 1, 2013. If you need to make a change to a plan that suits your medical and prescription needs, make sure you make them today.

For more information or help in making your decision, call the Health Insurance Counseling Project at **(202) 739-0668** and they will be happy to assist with finding the best plan for you.

## DC CAREGIVERS ONLINE CHAT AT NOON

Former caregiver Buddy Moore recently hosted the Office on Aging's **D.C. Caregivers Online Chat at Noon** for caregivers in the District. Mr. Moore shared his experiences with participants allowing them to find out firsthand how he was able to assist his wife Carolyn who was diagnosed with Lou Gherig's Disease or Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS). Mrs. Moore now deceased, was unable to move her body and caring for her became a challenge. Mr. Moore was able to share tips that could assist many caregivers as they care for their care receivers.

*(cont'd on next page)*

## Options Counseling



Options Counseling provides individuals, family members and/or significant others with support in their decisions to determine appropriate choices. During this process, a written plan for receiving community resources is developed based on an individual's needs, preferences, values, and circumstances. This service is available regardless of income or financial assets. The ADRC Options Counselor also provides clients with:

- A "live" voice that listens and understands the client's needs
- Respectful and truthful guidance
- Knowledgeable & responsive staff
- Thoughtful client follow-up, including a consumer satisfaction survey

Contact us for more information about counseling services or to make an appointment!



**500 K Street, NE**  
**Washington, D.C. 20002**  
**(202) 724-5626 • www.adrc.dc.gov**



# COMMUNITY EVENTS CALENDAR

## NOVEMBER

**2nd • 10am – 3pm &  
3rd • 9am-1pm**

The Office on Aging will exhibit at the 4th Annual Moving Forward and Transition Fair for DC Youth with Disabilities, Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Library, 901 G Street, NW. For more information, contact Alice Thompson, 202-535-1321.

**5th • 10am – 12pm**

Seniors Going Green! Presentations will be provided by DPW Recycling, DC Sustainable, Legal Counsel for the Elderly, Office of the Peoples Counsel and the DC Office on Aging and Aging and Disability Resource Center at Behrend Adas Senior Fellowship, 2850 Quebec Street, NW. For more information, call Alice Thompson at 202-535-1321.

**6th • 11am – 1pm**

Seniors Going Green! Presentations rendered by DPW Recycling, DC Sustainable, Legal Counsel for the Elderly, Office of the Peoples Counsel and DC Office on Aging and Aging and Disability Resource Center at St. Albans Episcopal Church, 3001 Wisconsin Avenue, NW. For more information, call Alice Thompson at 202-535-1321.

**8th • 5 - 8:30pm**

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 • 10am - 2pm**

Southwest Waterfront AARP Chapter # 4751 Health Fair Provided by DCOA / ADRC at River Park Mutual Homes 1301 Delaware Avenue, SW, Free – Flu shots will also be available. For more information, call 202-535-1321.

**14th • 10am – 2pm**

The Office on Aging will exhibit during the Community Health and Wellness Fair at River Park Mutual Homes, 1311 Delaware Avenue, SW. Walgreens will also be onsite administering free Flu Vaccines. For more information, please call Alice Thompson, 202-535-1321.

**14th • 1pm**

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

**15th • 10am – 2pm**

The 5th Annual Olmstead Conference, Kellogg Conference Hotel at Gallaudet University, 800 Florida Avenue, NE. The Office on Aging will be an exhibitor and Walgreens will be administering FREE Flu Vaccines. For more information, contact Alice Thompson, 202-535-1321.

**19th • 6 to 7:30pm**

Iona 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.

**28th • 12:45pm**

The Model Cities Senior Wellness Center will host a Storytelling Program. For More Information, call Monica Carroll 202 635-1900 x24

**28th • 1:30 to 3pm**

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 give 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 • 9am – 2pm**

The Office on Aging will exhibit at the Family Caregivers Forum at Providence Hospital, St. Catharine's Hall, 10th and Varnum Streets, NE. For more information, call Alice Thompson, 202-535-1321.

**5th • 10am-2pm**

The Mayor's Annual Senior Holiday Celebration will be held to celebrate the holiday season at the D.C. Armory, 2001 East Capitol Street, 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.

## DC CAREGIVERS ONLINE CHAT AT NOON (cont'd from previous page)

Commonly known as *Lou Gehrig's Disease*, ALS is a fatal neuromuscular disease where 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.

In case you missed the online chat featuring Buddy Moore, interested persons can log on to [www.dcoa.dc.gov](http://www.dcoa.dc.gov) to replay the chat. 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.

To find out more information about ALS and resources available, call The ALS Association - DC/MD/VA Chapter at **301-978-9855** or go online to **[www.ALSinfo.org](http://www.ALSinfo.org)**.

## 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.

**500 K Street, NE, Washington, D.C. 20002**  
**202-724-5622 • [www.dcoa.dc.gov](http://www.dcoa.dc.gov)**  
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Executive Director

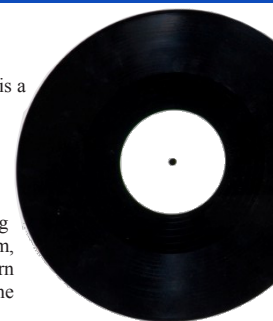
In accordance with the D.C. Human Rights Act of 1977, as amended, D.C. Official Code Section §§2-1401.01 et seq., (Act), the D.C. Office on Aging does not discriminate on the basis of actual or perceived: race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, personal appearance, sexual orientation, 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.



## Our Members Prefer Old-School Classics!

The D.C. Office on Aging (DCOA) Ambassador Program is a FREE, interactive, member-based program designed to reach out to older adults and/or their caregivers to help them learn about the services and resources available to them through DCOA.

If you are interested in expanding your network and educating older adults about the services and resources available to them, join us for our next **Ambassador Training Workshop** to learn about all of the programs and services that DCOA offers to the community and how you can become an Ambassador.



### Upcoming Ambassador Training Workshops:

Wednesday, November 14, 2012	9:00 a.m. - 12 p.m.
Wednesday, December 12, 2012	9:00 a.m. - 12 p.m.

All workshops are held in DCOA Headquarters and include: an overview of Office on Aging programs and services, information on how to access resources, and guidance on your role as an advocate.



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**To register and for more information, call (202) 724-5622**

