

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA OFFICE ON AGING

Spotlight On Aging



VOLUME XXV, ISSUE 4

A newsletter for D.C. Seniors

April 2014



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

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

In this issue of “Spotlight on Aging,” I would like to discuss how important it is to ensure that every senior in the District of Columbia is safe and secure during a disaster.

At the D.C. Office on Aging, we try to take a proactive approach to ensure that all of our seniors and persons with disabilities are well equipped, and are able to access the necessary services during a catastrophic event. During an emergency, the agency works with its partners to deliver meals and provide critical transportation for medical appointments.

We also partner with our six lead agencies to provide a wide range of social and health services throughout all eight wards. These agencies act as community satellites that continually strengthen our link to older Washingtonians.

Through our Senior Service Network, we provide assistance to nearly 30,000 seniors in the District. And in emergencies, such as those caused by inclement weather and power outages, we rely on our Network and other community partners to keep seniors informed.

In addition to working with our Senior Service Network, the D.C. Office on Aging partners with other District agencies to prepare District seniors for potential emergencies. Examples of these collaborations include:

- **Smart 9-1-1** — The D.C. Office on Aging partners with the Office of Unified Communications to inform seniors and other District residents about the Smart 9-1-1 pro-

gram. This is a free service that allows participants to create a safety profile for their households that will automatically appear when someone from an associated number calls 9-1-1. The Smart 911 Safety Profile provides first responders with vital information that will assist them with knowing who is in the home and their needs during an emergency.

- **First Responders Program** — In partnership with the Department of Health and the Health Emergency Preparedness and Response Administration, the D.C. Office on Aging trains volunteers to help as first responders in case of an emergency. These volunteers will be used to support their local communities during a city disaster caused by nature, terrorist or unforeseen events where first responders need support.

It is important that all of our seniors are equipped with the proper supplies they may need in the event of an emergency or disaster. I encourage you to get informed, make a plan, make an emergency kit that includes water, nonperishable, easy-to-prepare food items, flashlight, extra batteries, a battery powered or hand crank radio (NOAA weather radio, if possible) and a well-stocked first-aid kit.

If you or someone you know is interested in getting involved with any of these initiatives and/or wants to learn more about the resources available for emergency preparedness, please contact the D.C. Office on Aging at 202-724-5622.

Senior Receives Honorary Doctorate Degree

Congratulations to Ward 7 resident Doris A.M. Thomas, who received an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters from the Abundant Life Bible College and Theological Seminary.

Thomas, a cancer survivor for more than 45 years, has worked with the “Reach to Recovery Program” with the American Cancer Society, visiting hospitals and homes of persons who have undergone cancer surgery.

Thomas, 89, has also served as a spokesperson for the disease in public service announcements and in radio and television interviews.

An active member of the Washington Seniors Wellness Center, she founded the Serenity Players Theatre Company, a professional community theater program that performs for underserved communities, and served as the company director for nearly 30 years.

She is also the author of two books of poetry, *The Will to Live*

and *The Will to Live Continues*. She presently hosts “Senior Talk” on Inner Light Radio, which is heard every third Thursday at 11 a.m. on www.PositiveEnergyWorks.com or via Skype: [inner_light_radio](https://www.skype.com/inner_light_radio).



Honorary Doctorate recipient
Dr. Doris Thomas

Mayor Gray Signs Senior Citizen Real Property Tax Relief Act

Legislation Designed to Help Keep Longtime Residents from Being Forced Out of District

Mayor Gray, joined by members of the D.C. Council, other District government officials and senior residents, signed the Senior Citizen Real Property Tax Relief Act of 2014 on March 25. The legislation exempts low- and middle-income seniors from real-property taxes if they are at least 70 years old and have owned a residence in the District for 20 consecutive years or longer.

“When I first became Mayor, I made a commitment to ensuring that our senior residents remain an integral part of the economic development and growth of our city — and this legislation helps us achieve that goal,” Mayor Gray said. “My budgets and my administration’s policies will continue to place a priority on ensuring that our seniors have the option of aging in the place they have called home for decades, even as we continually attract

new residents to our vibrant, diverse and growing city.”

Mayor Gray also thanked At-Large Councilmember Anita Bonds, who originally drafted the bill. “This legislation fits nicely with our priorities, and I very much appreciate the efforts it took Councilmember Bonds to get us here today,” he said.

During Mayor Gray’s State of the District Address on March 11, he detailed his commitment to an additional \$100 million investment in affordable housing on top of the \$187 million investment he previously announced. The vast majority of it will go into the District’s Housing Production Trust Fund.

But he also proposed dedicating some of that funding to make certain the “Senior Citizen Real Property Tax Relief Act of 2014” is funded. This commitment includes making sure the Office of the Chief Financial Officer has the resources available to assist applicants seeking an exemption.



28th Annual Salute to District of Columbia Centenarians

Nearly 30 centenarians attended the 28th Annual Salute to District of Columbia Centenarians held at the Kellogg Conference Hotel at Gallaudet University.

Mayor Gray greeted the centenarians and their family members during the event, and had an opportunity to present several honorees with medallions celebrating their longevity.

One of the oldest centenarians present, Corporal Alyce Dixon, 106, cut a ceremonial cake to celebrate the occasion.



Ada Clark - 102



Angella Hayes - 101



Arthur Peterson - 100



Charlotte Wilkins - 101



Corporal Alyce Dixon - 106



Eleanor Valentine - 105



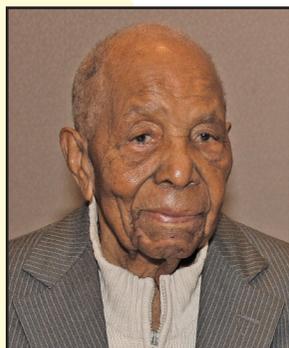
Elizabeth Lee - 107



Fannie Gibson - 100



Geneva Perry - 101



George Bogges - 102



Inez Dade - 101



Laura Griffin - 101



Lois Showell - 101



Lola Saunders - 100



Lucille Just-Buddy - 102



Lula Mae Henderson Scott - 102



Mable Henson - 102



Madelyn Brown - 100



Margaret LaFrank - 100



Marie Johnson - 102

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Mary Parsons - 104



Marybelle Stoney - 100



Milton Scandrett - 101



Pauline Bates - 100



Virginia McLaurin - 105

DCOA After Hours Emergency Assistance

District residents who are either age 60 and older or living with disabilities at age 18 and older, or their caregivers, can now call DCOA and get assistance for crisis intervention and other emergencies after hours, on holidays and when the government is closed.

When the office is closed, emergencies can now be handled by calling our main number, 202-724-5622, and our information and assistance number, 202-724-5626. We are here to serve you. Just give us a call.

Note: All callers requiring fire and medical assistance should still contact 9-1-1.

SAVE THE DATE!

Third Annual Mayor's Senior Symposium
Wednesday, May 7

At Hyatt Regency on Capitol Hill
400 New Jersey Ave. NW
Washington, D.C. 20001

For more details, visit www.dcoa.dc.gov
or call 202-724-5626.

New Date for Agency Performance Hearing

The DCOA Budget Oversight hearing, to take place before the Committee on Health, has been rescheduled to Thursday, May 8 at 10 a.m. in Room 123 of the John A. Wilson Building, 1350 Pennsylvania Ave. NW.

Persons interested in providing testimony should contact Rayna Smith, Committee Director, at 202-724-8170 or rsmith@dccouncil.us.

Like DCOA on Facebook

If you haven't done so already, visit www.facebook.com/DCAgingNews and click "Like." Leave a comment and tell us about a senior that has influenced your life.

Facebook is a great way to connect with the Office on Aging daily. Give us your feedback, find out information, and let us know how we can assist you.

See you on Facebook!

Searching For Ms. Senior D.C. 2014



Candidate must be a

- ✓ District of Columbia resident,
- ✓ 60 years of age or older.

Each contestant MUST:

- ✓ Display a talent presentation
- ✓ Provide a statement that conveys her Philosophy of Life
- ✓ In evening wear, contestants should demonstrate elegance, grace, poise, and **STYLE!**
- ✓ Evening Gowns **MUST** be floor length.

If you are that Lady that represents
The "Age of Elegance" with grace,
community service, poise, inner
beauty and style, please contact us as
soon as possible to enter!

For an application or general information contact:

Victoria Johnson, (202)289-1510, ext. 1127

vjohnson@familymattersdc.org or

Lillie Gafford (202) 289-1510, ext. 1330

Lgafford@familymattersdc.org

Community Calendar

April events

5th • 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Join the Temple of Praise's Employment Ministry for its spring 2014 Job Fair for Ward 8 residents at the Mary Virginia Merrick Center, 4275 4th St. SE. For more information, call 202-552-9451.

9th • 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

The Washington Seniors Wellness Center will host a D.C. Office on Aging Town Hall Meeting with guest speaker Dr. John Thompson. The center is located at 3001 Alabama Ave. SE. For more information, call Kellie Cass Broussard at 202-581-0963.

11th

Join Seabury Resources for Aging on their Ward 5 "Volunteer Appreciation Day" at all Ward 5 Nutrition Sites. To register, call Vivian Grayton at 202-529-8701.

12th • 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The Capital Heights Police Department and the Washington, D.C. Sixth District Metropolitan Police are hosting the first annual "Unity in the Community" Parade and Festival for Ward 7 residents. The parade will begin at the crossing of Central Ave. and Addison Rd. and will end at the Marvin Gaye Park, where the main event will follow. There will also be a

free health fair, food and entertainment. For more information, contact Willa Hamer at 301-420-2444.

12th • 10 a.m.

Seabury Resources for Aging is hosting a volunteer appreciation brunch at Trinity University, 125 Michigan Ave. NE. For more information, call Vivian Grayton at 202-529-8701.

14th • 11 a.m.

There will be a Town Hall meeting for Ford Lincoln Tower 3 at 3298 Fort Lincoln Dr. NE. For more information, call Vivian Grayton at 202-529-8701.

19th • 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The District of Columbia Homeland and Security and Emergency Management Agency presents an emergency preparedness and CPR training session for Ward 8 residents in the first floor media room at the Unified Communications Center, 2720 Martin Luther King, Jr. Ave. SE. To register, submit a registration form to JC Cruz, outreach coordinator, at 202-481-3174.

22nd • 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

The Washington Seniors Wellness Center will host a mini wellness fair for all Ward 7 residents. The center is located at 3001 Alabama Ave. SE. For more information, call Kellie Cass Broussard at 202-581-0963.

24th • 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

The East River Family Strengthening Collaborative and the DCOA present a Community Health and Wellness Fair at the Mayfair Mansion Senior Center, 3744½ Hayes St. NE. For more information, contact John Pinkney at 202-440-2339.

26th • 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The DCOA presents a Community Health, Wellness and Informational Fair for Ward 2 residents at the Georgetown Retirement Residence, 2512 Q St. NW. For more information, contact Zee Martin at 202-338-6111.

May event

15th • 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Save the date for the East River Swing Prom for senior Ward 7 residents. For more information, contact Robin Gantt at 202-534-4880, ext. 110, or Mrs. C. Bryant at 202-534-4880, ext. 125.

Ongoing

Ward 5 residents who are 60 or older and need legal advice can call Seabury Resources for Aging to speak to a lawyer on Mondays. For more information or to receive advice, call 202-529-8701.

Seabury Connector Transportation Service

Seabury Connector is a Washington, D.C. city-wide transportation service and a part of the D.C. Office on Aging Senior Network. It provides transportation to medical appointments, adult day services and senior group trips, and meal delivery to the homebound. Services are free to D.C. residents 60 years of age and older.

Last fall, Seabury Resources for Aging received the grant to transform the transportation service for older adults called WEHTS (Washington

Elderly Handicapped Transportation Service) into a model transportation service. Customer service, including a new Service Center to handle all reservations, is paramount.

In addition to new vehicles and new technology, the vision includes expanded hours, shorter wait times and alternative services. The new name, Seabury Connector, was selected to reflect its mission to keep seniors connected with their community.

Transportation to Medical Appointments

Seabury Connector provides a critical service transporting older D.C. residents to medical appointments, including dialysis and cancer treatment centers. The curb-to-curb service uses wheelchair-accessible vehicles. Escorts are allowed and, indeed, required for anyone with dementia or anyone who needs assistance going from their home to the vehicle or from the vehicle to their medical appointment.

In January, Seabury Connector added transportation to Saturday dialysis appointments, and the ridership has grown 75 percent in two months. For a better understanding of the service options and enrollment, call the Service Center at 202-727-7771.

New Service Center

Seabury Connector recently opened a new Service Center to schedule and track all reservations citywide, and to respond to inquiries about transportation service options. The Service Center is open Monday through Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

The Service Center counselors are trained to assist callers, make referrals to other service options, and en-

roll new clients. The Center also has a Spanish-speaking counselor, as well as access to language translation services.

Updated Vehicles

To be a first-rate service, Seabury Connector requires vehicles that are new, comfortable, and updated with navigation systems and safety features. The newest vehicles in the current fleet have been rebranded and will be retrofitted with additional equipment.

Seabury has ordered 39 new vehicles to replace older vehicles and expand the fleet and mode of transportation options. Seabury is designing a fleet that best fits the needs of the community.

More Options

Seabury Connector is looking at additional options for transportation so that older adults can enjoy the Washington community and age successfully. Currently, the program also offers taxicab fare discounts based on income eligibility.

So, if you are a Washington, D.C. resident age 60+, call Seabury Connector 202-727-7771 and ride with us!

SPOTLIGHT ON AGING

Spotlight On Aging is published by the Information Office of the D.C. Office on Aging for D.C. senior residents. Advertising contained in the *Beacon* is not endorsed by the D.C. Office on Aging or by the publisher.

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or perceived: race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, personal appearance, sexual orientation, familial status, family responsibilities, matriculation, political affiliation, disability, source of income, and 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 subjected to disciplinary action.

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



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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

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

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MAYOR GRAY SIGNS SENIOR CITIZEN REAL PROPERTY TAX RELIEF ACT

Legislation Designed to Help Keep Longtime Residents from Being Forced Out of District

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DCOA PROVIDING EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE AFTERHOURS (continued)

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More Options Seabury Connector is looking at additional options for transportation so that older adults can enjoy the Washington community and age successfully. Currently, taxi cab fare discounts are available, based on income eligibility, through the program.

So if you are a Washington, D.C. resident aged 60+, call Seabury Connector and ride with us! ~

NEW DATE FOR AGENCY PERFORMANCE HEARING

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Persons interested in providing testimony should contact Rayna Smith, Committee Director at (202) 724-8170 or rsmith@dccouncil.us.